

2003

Correspondence, Conferences, Documents, Volume XIIIa. Documents vol. 1

Vincent de Paul

Pierre Coste C.M.

Follow this and additional works at: https://via.library.depaul.edu/vincentian_ebooks

Recommended Citation

de Paul, Vincent and Coste, Pierre C.M., "Correspondence, Conferences, Documents, Volume XIIIa. Documents vol. 1" (2003). *Vincentian Digital Books*. 39.
https://via.library.depaul.edu/vincentian_ebooks/39

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Vincentian Heritage Collections at Via Sapientiae. It has been accepted for inclusion in Vincentian Digital Books by an authorized administrator of Via Sapientiae. For more information, please contact digitalservices@depaul.edu.

SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL

CORRESPONDENCE
CONFERENCES, DOCUMENTS

III

DOCUMENTS

VOLUME XIIIa

NEWLY TRANSLATED, EDITED, AND ANNOTATED

FROM THE 1924 EDITION

OF

PIERRE COSTE, C.M.



Edited by:

SR. MARIE POOLE, D.C. *Editor-in-Chief*

SR. JULIA DENTON, D.C.

SR. ELINOR HARTMAN, D.C.

SR. ELLEN VAN ZANDT, D.C.

Translated by:

SR. EVELYNE FRANC, D.C.

SR. MARIE POOLE, D.C.

REV. THOMAS DAVITT, C.M. (Latin)

REV. GLENNON E. FIGGE, C.M. (Latin)

REV. FRANCIS GERMOVNIK, C.M. (Latin)

REV. JOHN G. NUGENT, C.M. (Latin)

REV. ANDREW SPELMAN, C.M. (Latin)

Annotated by:

REV. JOHN W. CARVEN, C.M.

NIHIL OBSTAT

Very Rev. John Siedziona, C.M.

Censor Deputatus

IMPRIMATUR

+ Most Reverend W. Francis Malooly

Vicar General, Archdiocese of Baltimore

January 7, 2003

To

BERNARD KOCH, C. M.

whose scholarship
and
passion for accuracy
in the study
of these documents
have enriched our appreciation
of the sanctity and genius
of
Saint Vincent de Paul

© 2003, National Conference of Visitors of the United States
Published in the United States by New City Press
202 Cardinal Rd., Hyde Park, NY 12538
Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data:

Vincent de Paul, Saint, 1581-1660.

Correspondence, conferences, documents.

Translation of: Correspondence, entretiens, documents.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Contents: I. Correspondence. V. I. 1607-1639.—

v. 13a.

1. Vincent de Paul, Saint, 1581-1660—Correspondence.

2. Christian saints—France—Correspondence. I. Coste,
Pierre, 1873-1935, II. Title.

BX4700.V6A4 1985

271'.77'024 [B]

83-63559

ISBN 0-911782-50-8 (v. 1)

ISBN 1-56548-191-7 (v. 13)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	xiii
--------------------	------

PART I Documents Pertaining to Saint Vincent

1. Letters for Tonsure, December 20, 1596	1
2. Letters for Minor Orders, December 20, 1596.	2
3. Dimissorial Letters for Subdiaconate, September 10, 1598.	3
4. Letters for Subdiaconate, September 19, 1598.	4
5. Dimissorial Letters for Diaconate, December 11, 1598.	5
6. Letters for Diaconate, December 19, 1598.	6
7. Dimissorial Letters for Priesthood, September 13, 1599.	6
8. Letters for Priesthood, September 23, 1600.	7
8a. Saint Vincent Assumes the Lease of Saint-Léonard de Chaumes Abbey, May 14, 1610	8
9. Resignation of Saint-Léonard de Chaumes Abbey in Favor of Saint Vincent, May 17, 1610.	12
9a. Saint-Léonard de Chaumes Abbey and Paul Hurault de L'Hospital, May 28, 1611	17
10. Gift to the Charity Hospital, October 20, 1611	20
11. Act of Taking Possession of the Parish of Clichy, May 2, 1612.	22
12. Acknowledgment of a Debt, December 7, 1612	24
12a. Appointment as Pastor of Gamaches, February 28, 1614	25
13. Appointment as Canon of Écouis (1615-16)	26
14. Sermon on the Catechism.	31
15. Sermon on Holy Communion.	36
16. Sermon on Holy Communion.	38
17. Resignation of Saint-Léonard de Chaumes Abbey, October 29, 1616 .	42
18. Resignation of the Parish of Châtillon in Favor of Saint Vincent, April 19, 1617.	44
19. Appointment as Pastor of Châtillon, July 29, 1617	45
20. Act of Taking Possession of the Parish of Châtillon, August 1, 1617 .	47
21. Report of Charles Demia on Saint Vincent's Stay in Châtillon, August 7, 1665	49
22. Transfer of the Parish of Châtillon to Louis Girard, July 18, 1618 . . .	57
23. Commission as Chaplain General of the Galleys, February 8, 1619 . .	58
23a. Last Will and Testament of Madame de Gondi, February 25, 1619 . .	59
24. Power of Attorney to Take Possession of Saint-Nicolas de Grosse-Sauve Priory, February 7, 1624	66
25. Outline of a Sermon to Announce the Visitation of a Bishop	67
25a. Power of Attorney for Antoine Portail and Blaise Le Féron to Take Possession of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, March 2, 1624.	70

25b.	Act of Taking Possession of the Bons-Enfants by Antoine Portail in the Name of Vincent de Paul, March 6, 1624	72
25c.	Visitation Report of the Church in Clichy by the Archbishop of Paris, October 9, 1624	74
26.	Receipt for a Sum of Money, October 20, 1625	74
27.	Deed of Gift of Saint Vincent to his Relatives, September 4, 1626 . . .	75
28.	Testimony Concerning a Miraculous Recovery (Around 1628)	78
29.	Deposition at the Process of Beatification of Francis de Sales, April 17, 1628	80
30.	Appointment as Superior of the Visitation Nuns of Paris, May 9, 1628	96
31.	Receipt for a Sum of Money, July 27, 1630	97
31a.	Last Will and Testament of Saint Vincent, September 7, 1630	98
31b.	Canonical Visitation of the Convent of the Madelonnettes, February 12, 1635	101
31c.	Inspection and Certification of Documents Relative to the Hospitaler Nuns of the Charity of Our Lady, February 13, 1635	102
31d.	Approval of Constitutions of the Hospitaler Nuns of the Charity of Our Lady by the Bishop of Saintes, December 10, 1636	103
32.	Testimony Concerning Abbé de Saint-Cyran, March 31, April 1 and 2, 1639	104
33.	Interrogation of Abbé de Saint-Cyran, May 14-31, 1639	110
33a.	Appointment as A Visitor of the Principal Convent of the Jacobins in Paris, January 13, 1641	136
34.	Vision of the Three Globes (1641)	137
35.	Regulations for the Members of the Tuesday Conferences	140
35a.	A "Client" of Monsieur Vincent, September 18, 1642	144
35b.	Deposition concerning François Perrochel, Bishop-elect of Boulogne, July 4, 1643	145
35c.	Case in the Council of Conscience, December 6, 1644	147
36.	Dedication of <i>Ten Meditations</i> by Louis Machon, April 15, 1645 . . .	148
36a.	Testimony of Michel Le Tellier to the Comte d'Harcourt, July 8, 1645	150
36b.	Testimony of Cardinal Mazarin to the Comte d'Harcourt, July 19, 1645	151
37.	Dedication of <i>Hortus Pastorum</i> , October 23, 1646	152
38.	Excerpts from Mazarin's Notebooks, 1643-50	154
39.	Tribute of Monsieur de Rangouze, 1650	156
40.	Authorization for a Visitation Nun to Leave her Convent, July 20, 1650	157
41.	Outline of a Conference to the Ordinands	158
42.	Advice to a Distinguished Person	160
43.	Reflections on the Beauty of God	160
44.	Reflections on a Spiritual Retreat	161
45.	Reflections on Community Life	161
46.	Outline of a Conference to the Visitation Nuns (Around May 1655) .	162
47.	The Difference between the Spirit of the World and That of Jesus Christ	163
48.	A Study on Grace	164

48a.	Testimony Concerning Saint Vincent's Participation in Holy Thursday Liturgy	173
49.	Instruction to the Residents of the Nom-de-Jésus (Summer 1653) . . .	173
50.	Request Made to a Priest to Accept the Duty of Chaplain at the Hôtel-Dieu, May 20, 1655	179
50a.	Deposition Concerning Nicolas Sevin, Coadjutor Bishop-elect of Cahors, June 8, 1656	181
50b.	Authorization for Sister Angélique Le Roy to Leave her Convent, October 16, 1656	183
51.	Address to the Priests of Saint-Sulpice at the Death of their Founder, April 1657	184
52.	Advice to a Friend Who Desired an Agreement with the Jansenists . .	185
53.	Dedication to Saint Vincent of <i>Dictionnaire de la langue de Madagascar</i> , 1658	185
54.	Account of a Conversation with a Priest Who Favored Jansenism . . .	188
55.	Authorization for Sister Catherine-Agnes Lionne to Leave her Convent, June 8, 1658	189
56.	Advice to M. Loger, Attorney at the Parlement, November 2, 1658 . .	190
57.	Journal of the Last Days of Saint Vincent, June 5, 1660	191
57a.	Obituary of Saint Vincent and Accounts of His Memorial Services in the <i>Gazette de France</i>	208
58.	Gilbert Cuisot to Jean Dehorgny on the Virtues of Saint Vincent, 1661	210

PART II

Documents Pertaining to the Congregation of the Mission

59.	Foundation Contract of the Congregation of the Mission, April 17, 1625	213
60.	Act of Approval of the Congregation of the Mission by the Archbishop of Paris, April 24, 1626	218
60a.	Union of the Collège des Bons-Enfants to the Mission, July 20, 1626 . .	219
61.	Act of Association of the First Missionaries, September 4, 1626 . . .	222
61a.	Modification of the Foundation Contract of the Congregation of the Mission, April 17, 1627	224
62.	Royal Letters Patent for the Approval of the Congregation of the Mission, May 1627	226
62a.	First Petition to Urban VIII for Approval of the Mission (1627) . . .	228
62b.	Minutes of the Session at Which Propaganda Fide Considered Approval of the Mission, June 5, 1627	229
63.	Act of Union of the Collège des Bons-Enfants to the Congregation of the Mission, June 8, 1627	230
63a.	Request to the Nuncio to France, June 11, 1627	234
64.	Taking possession of the Collège des Bons-Enfants in the Name of the Congregation of the Mission, July 15, 1627	234
65.	Royal Letters Patent for the Union of the Collège des Bons-Enfants to the Mission, September 15, 1627	236

65a.	Reply of the Nuncio to Propaganda Fide concerning the Suitability of Saint Vincent to Direct the Mission, September 26, 1627	238
65b.	Minutes of the Session of Propaganda Fide Approving the Mission, November 5, 1627	239
65c.	Request to the Nuncio to Inform Saint Vincent of Papal Approval for the Mission, November 13, 1627	240
66.	Faculties Granted to the Priests of the Mission by the Archbishop of Paris, April 10, 1628	241
66a.	Second Petition to Pope Urban VIII (Vol. I, no. 26.)	242
67.	Letter of the Nuncio to Cardinal Ludovisio, June 21, 1628	242
68.	Letter of Louis XIII to Pope Urban VIII, June 24, 1628	243
69.	Letter of Louis XIII to the Comte de Béthune, French Ambassador to the Holy See, June 24, 1628	244
70.	Letter of the Nuncio to Bishop Francesco Ingoli, Secretary of Propaganda Fide, July 23, 1628	244
70a.	Third Petition to Pope Urban VIII (Vol. I, no. 28.)	245
71.	Letter of the Nuncio to Cardinal Ludovisio, August 15, 1628	245
71a.	Letter of the Nuncio to Bishop Francesco Ingoli, August 17, 1628	246
72.	Report to Propaganda Fide on the June 1628 Petition of Saint Vincent, August 22, 1628	247
73.	Decision of Propaganda Fide on the June 1628 Petition of Saint Vincent, August 22, 1628	249
73a.	Propaganda Fide to the Nuncio to France, September 1, 1628	250
73b.	Letter of the Nuncio to Bishop Ingoli, September 11, 1628	251
73c.	Propaganda Fide to the Nuncio to France, September 30, 1628	252
74.	Letters Patent Ordering the Parlement to Ratify the Letters of May 1627, February 15, 1630	252
75.	Opposition of the Pastors of Paris to Approval of the Congregation of the Mission, December 4, 1630	253
76.	Registration in the Parlement of Letters Patent of May 1627 and February 15, 1630, April 4, 1631	258
76a.	Contract Between the Priests of the Mission and Louise de Marillac with Gilles Guérin, August 26, 1631	259
77.	Contract for the Union of Saint-Lazare Priory to the Congregation of the Mission, January 7, 1632	263
78.	Entrance of the Congregation of the Mission into Saint-Lazare, January 8, 1632	271
79.	Approval by the Archbishop of Paris of the Union of Saint-Lazare to the Congregation of the Mission, January 8, 1632	275
80.	Letters Patent Confirming the Union of Saint-Lazare to the Congregation of the Mission, January 1632	280
81.	<i>Salvatoris Nostri</i> , Bull of Erection of the Congregation of the Mission (Now Doc. 84a.)	283
81a.	Document Relative to the Pontifical Approval of the Congregation of the Mission, January 1632 (Vol. I, no. 94a.)	283
82.	Declaration of Adrien Le Bon on the Contract of January 7, 1632, December 29, 1632	283

83.	Approval by the Archbishop of Paris of the Union of Saint-Lazare to the Mission, December 31, 1632	286
84.	Letters Patent Confirming the Union of Saint-Lazare to the Mission, January 1633	293
84a.	<i>Salvatoris Nostri</i> , Bull of Erection of the Congregation of the Mission, January 12, 1633	296
84b.	Contract for a Place at the Saint-Laurent Fair, May 23, 1633	305
84c.	Petition for Indulgences, March 19, 1635	306
85.	Regulations for Priests of the Mission Sent as Army Chaplains, 1636	307
85a.	Alain de Solminihac and the Cahors Seminary, April 22, 1638	309
85b.	Petition for Indulgences, 1640	310
85c.	New Petition for Indulgences, (Before February 3, 1640)	311
85d.	Replies to Robert Lachau on the Instruction of Ordinands, June 4, 1640	312
86.	Authorization for Louis Lebreton to Open a House in Rome, July 11, 1641	313
87.	Approval by the Archbishop of Paris of Vows Taken in the Congregation of the Mission, October 19, 1641	315
87a.	Foundation Contract for the House in Luçon (December 7, 1641)	317
88.	Royal Approval of the Bull <i>Salvatoris Nostri</i> , May 16, 1642	321
89.	Minutes of the Assembly at Saint-Lazare (October 1642)	322
89a.	Report on Saint-Yves Church in Rome (1643)	332
89b.	Excerpt from the Will of Jean Duhamel, April 23, 1643	333
90.	Foundation of the Marseilles House by the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, July 25, 1643	335
91.	Appointment of the Superior General of the Mission as Chaplain General of the Galleys, January 16, 1644	337
92.	Foundation of the Sedan House, June 14, 1644	339
92a.	Objection to the Assignment of the Gonesse Property to the Maréchal d'Estrées, December 12, 1644	341
92b.	Petition to the Royal Commissioners, June 19, 1645	342
92c.	Approval of a Work by Jean-Baptiste Noulleau Condemning Blasphemy, August [28] 1645	344
93.	Advice to Boniface Nouelly and Jean Barreau Before Their Departure for Algiers, (Around May 1646)	344
94.	Appointment of Lambert aux Couteaux to the Consulate of Algiers, July 5, 1646	346
95.	Functions of the Royal Chaplain of the Galleys, July 1646	347
96.	Regulations for the Priests of the Mission in Marseilles Who Minister to the Galley Convicts	348
97.	Duties of the Consuls and Missionaries in Barbary	350
97a.	Petition to the Parlement, April 1647	351
97b.	Petition to the Parlement, July 1647	356
98.	Authorization for Charles Nacquart and Nicolas Gondrée to Travel to Madagascar, March 30, 1648	358
99.	Authorization for Several Priests and Brothers to Travel to Various Establishments, April 5, 1648	359

100. Establishment by Propaganda Fide of the Madagascar Mission, July 20, 1648.....	361
101. Faculties Granted by Propaganda Fide to Nicolas Duport for the Madagascar Mission, 1650.....	362
102. Resolutions Concerning the Establishment in Marseilles, July 9, 1650.....	365
103. Safe-conduct for Missionaries Sent to Champagne and Picardy, February 14, 1651.....	367
104. Minutes of the Assembly at Saint-Lazare, August 11, 1651.....	368
105. Account of the Assembly at Saint-Lazare, 1651.....	374
106. Approval of the Rules of the Congregation of the Mission by the General Assembly, August 11, 1651.....	395
107. Authorization for Lambert aux Couteaux and Companions to Travel to Poland, September 4, 1651.....	398
108. Safe-conduct for the Missionaries sent to Palaiseau, June 5, 1652...	400
109. Rule of Life for Jean Le Vacher and Martin Husson, 1653.....	401
110. Study of the Vows Taken in the Congregation of the Mission and of the Privilege of Exemption (Between 1653 and 1655)...	403
111. The Monks of Saint-Victor Monastery at the Marseilles Seminary, 1655.....	408
112. Bull of Alexander VII for the Union of Saint-Lazare Priory to the Congregation of the Mission, April 18, 1655.....	409
113. <i>Ex commissa nobis</i> , Brief of Alexander VII Approving the Vows Taken in the Congregation of the Mission, September 22, 1655..	417
114. Acceptance by the Saint-Lazare House of the Brief <i>Ex commissa nobis</i> , October 22, 1655.....	419
115. Foundation for the Assistance of Barbary Slaves, December 20, 1655.....	421
116. Declaration Relative to the Establishment in Cr�cy (Between 1654 and 1660).....	422
116a. Receipt Signed by Saint Vincent, June 4, 1657.....	423
117. Bull Uniting Saint-M��en Abbey to the Seminary Established in That Place, April 5, 1658.....	423
117a. Common Rules of the Congregation of the Mission, May 17, 1658..	430
118. Foundation and Closure of the Major Seminary in Montpellier, 1659.....	471
119. Verdict of Fulmination for the Union of Saint-Lazare Priory to the Congregation of the Mission, July 21, 1659.....	472
120. <i>Alias nos</i> , Brief on the Vow of Poverty Taken in the Congregation of the Mission, August 12, 1659.....	480
121. Declaration for the Election of the Vicar-General, October 7, 1659..	483
122. Declaration for the Election of the Superior General, October 9, 1659	484
123. Letters Patent Confirming the Union of Saint-Lazare Priory to the Mission, March 1660.....	485

INTRODUCTION

Vatican Council II encouraged religious Congregations to a rebirth of the primitive spirit by a "return to the sources" of their foundations. With the publication of Vol. 13 *Documents* of the series *Vincent de Paul, Correspondence, Conferences, Documents*, a large number of the priceless texts relating to Saint Vincent and his works are now available in English.

In his 1924 introduction to the French edition of *Documents*, Pierre Coste, C.M., wrote the following:

Saint Vincent has left other writings besides his letters and other talks, and his Conferences to the Missionaries and the Daughters of Charity. These writings and talks, well worth being conserved, are found in this third part of the series. It seemed helpful to add to them the documents that recall the facts of his life, the titles, benefices, or honors he received, and the creation, organization, and early development of his works. This collection will allow future biographers of Saint Vincent to readily avoid errors in dates or in other matters into which their predecessors have too often fallen.

The documents are classified under five principal headings, according to whether they concern Saint Vincent himself, the Congregation of the Mission, the Confraternities of Charity, the Daughters of Charity, or the Ladies of Charity.

With the completion of the first eight volumes of the series (*Correspondence*), the reader may have noted that Vol. 13 is being printed out of sequence. Although the second section, consisting of Vols. 9-10 (*Conferences to the Daughters of Charity*) and Vols. 11-12 (*Conferences to the Congregation of the Mission*), has not yet appeared, the editors have seen fit to advance the publication of

Introduction. Note: For those biographical entries that have already appeared in volumes 1-8, only the *reference* is given to the volume, page, and note in which the full entry appears. The volume is indicated by a Roman numeral in bold type, the page by an italicized Arabic number, and the note is preceded by the abbreviation "n."

Vol. 13 in order to provide access to texts that have never appeared in English, whereas several versions of the Conferences are already available in that language. The updated Vols. 9-12 will be published in subsequent years.

Because of the large number of new documents discovered since Coste's publication, the size of the volume has almost doubled; the editors, therefore, have found it necessary to print Vol. 13 in two parts: Vol. 13a includes documents relating to Saint Vincent and to the Congregation of the Mission; Vol. 13b contains those pertinent to the Confraternities of Charity, the Daughters of Charity, and the Ladies of Charity. The index for both volumes will be found at the end of Vol. 13b.

Copies of the texts used in the French edition have not always been accurate; today, however, the electronic revolution makes possible the location of more correct versions. Researchers have unearthed some documents with which Coste was unfamiliar, and the contents of the English edition have been enriched by these heretofore undiscovered treasures, garnered from publications such as *Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission, Mission et Charité* (XV), *San Vicente de Paul Obras Completas, Vol. X, Documentos*, as well as from collections in the Vatican Archives and various other archives and private collections. It should be noted that space does not allow the inclusion of *all* the documents relating to Saint Vincent, e.g., some of the foundation contracts of establishments of the Congregation of the Mission; however, reference to these contracts has been made in the footnotes.

Work on this volume presented a real challenge, especially the translation of numerous Latin, Italian, and French legal documents, which must be drawn up with legal precision and involve frequent use of expressions such as "the aforementioned," "the said," etc. Furthermore, these seventeenth-century texts have very little punctuation and are composed of extremely long sentences. Coste edited the originals by modernizing the spelling, breaking the long sentences into shorter ones, and introducing punctuation. In this English edition, the editors have also tried, while preserving the necessary formality of legal language, to make the documents

reader-friendly. Where feasible, they have omitted many of "the aforesaid," etc. In the presentation of the minutes of Council meetings of the Daughters of Charity, the editors have opted for a spoken style, i.e., they have provided a reader's version of the documents, rather than a student's or scholar's version. Serious researchers may continue to consult the originals.

The documents furnish historical proofs of Vincent's activities from pre-ordination days to his death and provide his location on many given dates. Deeds, land titles, records, accounts, council deliberations, contracts, reports, outlines, sermons, Repetitions of Prayer, Rules, foundations, and approbations [diocesan, civil, papal] give testimony to his organizational genius in many arenas, most of which are related in some way to his charity. At the same time they offer a panorama of the religious, spiritual, political, and social situation of seventeenth-century France and the Catholic Church.¹

Coste did not opt to include in his series the Common Rules that guided the Congregation of the Mission for over three centuries. In recent years, the discovery of one of the primitive manuscripts of the Rules, now referred to as the "Codex Sarzana," has provided a look at the development of the Saint's thinking. Vincent's desire for a more precise formulation of the Rules is evident in the fact that he put off publishing the Rules until 1658.

Several versions of the Common Rules of the Daughters of Charity, in which Saint Louise de Marillac undoubtedly had a hand, are also printed in this volume, along with the Particular Rules of their various ministries, some of which have never been published in English, e.g., Rules for the Sisters Working with the Galley Convicts. The "official" Rules of the Daughters of Charity did not appear in print until 1672. Although they have come to be known as "Almérás' Rules," they truly embody the spirit and charism of Saint Vincent.

¹For an excellent overview of the contents of Coste's Vol. 13, *Documents*, and a listing of pertinent bibliographical references, see the comprehensive presentation of John Rybolt, C.M., "Documentary Evidence for the Life and Works of Saint Vincent de Paul," *Vincentiana*, 4-5-6 (1987), pp. 392-437.

Similarities in the Rules for both Communités reflect the authentic thinking of Saint Vincent and the fruit of his wisdom and long experience. For the Founder, "Christ is the Rule," and this he has tried to convey to his sons and daughters in their lives of service to Christ in those who are poor.

The publication of Vol. 13 represents a collaborative effort that spans the globe: Daughters of Charity and Priests of the Congregation of the Mission in Australia, England, France, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Taiwan, and the United States have contributed in diverse ways to its realization. The editors are grateful for the interest and scholarship of these members of the Vincentian family, which assure a more accurate and informed presentation of the documents. Special thanks are given to Thomas Davitt, C.M., Ignatius M. Melito, C.M., and John E. Rybolt, C.M., for their dedication in reading the manuscript. Their expertise in history, theology, Sacred Scripture, and the English language, and their knowledge of Vincentian history and spirituality have allowed the editors to correct errors, clarify texts, and make stylistic changes which render the documents more readable. By the invaluable contribution each has made, they have merited the gratitude, not only of the editorial staff, but of all who will be enriched by reading this volume.

De Paul Supérieur General de la Congregation de la Mission
pour de la Congregation des Filles de la Charité, devant les Pauvres atteints au Paris. A nos très-chers et bien-
aimés en Jesus Christ notre Seigneur Barthe Baillif, Catherine Baucher, et Catherine Bony Fille
de la Charité, Salut en la direction de notre Seigneur. Notre Congregation des Filles de la Charité aye
environ huit ans affectée à l'assistance de la Reverendissime Reine de Poligone dans la ville de Varsovie, po
sément des Pauvres malades, et la Maie de Nous ayant depuis quelques mois fait l'honneur de Nous dema
nder de nos Filles. Nous désirons satisfaire aux desirs et aux commandemens d'une si digne Prince
esse en envoyant et par ces présentes vous envoyons en l'adite Ville pour y recevoir les Ordres que la Maie
esse, et y garder la manière de vivre, que vous avez accoutumée en France, sous la direction de Monsi
eur, ou autre qui sera Supérieur des Filles de notre dite Congregation qui sont maintenant en Poligone
le bon plaisir de Notre Seigneur les Illustrissimes, et Reverendissimes Evêques des lieux. Vous exhi
bera faire votre devoir. Sur tout d'être dans une parfaite union, et obéissance de vos Règlements. G
ardez de la Misericorde de Dieu, Nous la supplions qu'elle vous conserve et benisse. En foi dequoy Nous
signons ces présentes de notre main, et y mettons fait apposer le sceau de notre dite Congregation. A Saint
le 15 le dixième jour de Septembre mil six cents soixante.

Monsieur Desuril jugeur sup. Gen. de la Cour de la Religion & d
des Filles de la Charité

Par mondit Sieur Supérieur General
Thomas Berthe

155. - This authorization of September 16, 1660, in the handwriting of Thomas Berthe, C.M.,
Secretary General, is one of the last documents signed by Saint Vincent, who died eleven days later.

SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL

DOCUMENTS

PART I

DOCUMENTS PERTAINING TO SAINT VINCENT

1. - LETTERS FOR TONSURE

(December 20, 1596)

We, Salvat Diharse, by the grace of God and the Holy Apostolic See Bishop of Tarbes,¹ make known to all that, on the day indicated below, during the fast of the Ember Days after the feast of Saint Lucy,² while celebrating the general conferral of Holy Orders in the collegiate church of Bidache,³ diocese of Dax, by permission of the Canons and of the Chapter of the cathedral church of Dax, the Episcopal See being vacant, we conferred clerical tonsure in the Lord on our beloved Vincent de Paul, legitimate and natural son of R . . .⁴ de Paul and Bertrande du Moras of the parish of Pouy, diocese of Dax, born of legitimate marriage and being of sufficient age and knowl-

Document 1. - Archives of the Mission, 95 rue de Sèvres, Paris, authenticated copy made on January 22, 1712, on the occasion of the process of beatification. The original is in Latin.

¹In Hautes-Pyrénées. Bishop Diharse, a Basque and a family friend of Bertrande de Moras, Saint Vincent's mother, died on October 7, 1648.

²Virgin and martyr, whose feast day is celebrated on December 13.

³Near Bayonne (Pyrénées-Atlantiques).

⁴In *La vie du Vénérable Serviteur de Dieu Vincent de Paul* (Paris: Florentin Lambert, 1664), Louis Abelly states that Saint Vincent's father's name was *Jean* (cf. bk. 1, chap. II, p. 7); English translation and edition published by New City Press (New Rochelle, NY), bk. 1, chap. II, p. 35.

edge, and, by virtue of dimissorial letters,⁵ we enrolled him in the ranks of the clergy.

In confirmation whereof we have commissioned the registrar of the Chapter in the said church to draw up and transcribe the present letters, sealed with our small seal, December 20 in the year of Our Lord 1596.

S. DIHARSE, *Bishop of Tarbes*

By proxy for the Lord Bishop of Tarbes

DEPAGADOY, *Chief Registrar*, and with the seal.

2. - LETTERS FOR MINOR ORDERS¹

(December 20, 1596)

We, Salvat Diharse, by the grace of God and the Holy Apostolic See Bishop of Tarbes, make known to all that, on the Friday indicated below, during the fast of the Ember Days of Saint Lucy, in the year and month given below, while celebrating the general conferral of Holy Orders during High Mass in the collegiate church of Bidache, diocese of Dax, by permission of the Canons and the Chapter of the cathedral church of Dax, the Episcopal See being vacant, we promoted to the Order of Acolyte and the other Minor Orders, according to the rites and canonically, in the Lord, by virtue of dimissorial letters, our beloved Vincent [de] Paul, of the diocese of Dax, whom, after examination, we found satisfactory and suitable.

In confirmation whereof we have commissioned the registrar of the Chapter in the said church to transcribe the present letters,

⁵Statements giving a subject permission to be ordained by a Bishop other than his own Ordinary. Saint Vincent needed these documents from the Chapter of Dax because the Dax diocese did not have a Bishop at that time.

Document 2. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, authenticated copy made on January 22, 1712, on the occasion of the process of beatification. The original is in Latin.

¹According to Church law until the middle of the twentieth century, a candidate for Holy Orders received four Minor Orders following tonsure: porter, lector, exorcist, acolyte.

sealed with our small seal, December 20 in the year of Our Lord 1596.

S. DIHARSE, *Bishop of Tarbes*

By proxy for the Lord Bishop of Tarbes

DEPAGADOY, *Chief Registrar*, and with the seal.

3. - DIMISSORIAL LETTERS FOR SUBDIACONATE¹

(September 10, 1598)

Guillaume de Massiot, Bachelor of Pontifical Law, Canon of the cathedral church, and Vicar-General of Dax, the Episcopal See being vacant, to our beloved Vincent de Paul, of the diocese of Dax, greetings in the Lord.

By these letters we grant you the special permission and faculty so that, having been found suitably prepared, of legitimate age, and furnished with a proper canonical title,² you may lawfully receive the Holy Order of Subdiaconate from any Catholic Archbishop, Bishop, or Prelate of your choice, provided that the person chosen is in favor and communion with the Holy Apostolic See, not suspended nor separated from the Pontifical Office, and that you receive this Order within the time stated by law. By virtue of this faculty, you may receive this Order, and the same Archbishop, Bishop, or Prelate may freely confer it on you.

Document 3. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, authenticated copy made on January 22, 1712, on the occasion of the process of beatification. The original is in Latin.

¹By divine institution there are three grades in the sacrament of Holy Orders: diaconate, priesthood, and episcopacy. Although subdiaconate had been considered the first step to sacred ordination, since it was of ecclesiastical origin the 1983 Code of Canon Law abolished the Order of subdeacon for the Latin Church.

²To receive Holy Orders a candidate must have a guaranteed means of support (a title) either from incardination in a diocese or membership in a religious Order or Community. On May 2, 1659, Saint Vincent wrote to Edme Jolly in Rome to request that the Holy See accept *mensa communis* [common table] as the title for members of the Congregation of the Mission.

Given in Dax, signed by our own hand and with the seal of the Chapter of Dax, and with the signature of our registrar inscribed below, September 10 in the year of Our Lord 1598.

G. DE MASSIOT, *aforesaid Vicar*

By proxy for the Lord Vicar

DARTIGUELONGUE, *Registrar*, and with the seal.

4. - LETTERS FOR SUBDIACONATE

(September 19, 1598)

We, Salvat Diharse, by the mercy of God Bishop of Tarbes, make known to one and all that, on the Saturday of the Ember Days after the feast of the Holy Cross,¹ in the month and year indicated below, in our cathedral church of Tarbes, while celebrating the general conferral of Holy Orders during High Mass, we thought fit to promote, and we have promoted to the Holy Order of Subdiaconate, according to the rites and canonically, our beloved Vincent de Paul, of the diocese of Dax, sent to us and found suitably prepared.

Drawn up and given in Tarbes, under our small seal of red wax and with the signature of our undersigned secretary, September 19 in the year of Our Lord 1598.

S. DIHARSE, *Bishop of Tarbes*

By proxy for my Lord the Bishop

DE CASENAVE, *Secretary*

Document 4. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, authenticated copy made on January 22, 1712, on the occasion of the process of beatification. The original is in Latin.

¹The feast of the Triumph of the Cross is celebrated on September 14.

5. - DIMISSORIAL LETTERS FOR DIACONATE

(December 11, 1598)

Guillaume de Massiot, Bachelor of Pontifical Law, Canon of the cathedral church of Dax, and Vicar-General in spiritual and temporal affairs of the Most Reverend Father and Lord in Christ Jean-Jacques Dusault,¹ Bishop of Dax by the grace of God and the Holy Apostolic See, and counselor *a secretis* to the most Christian King, to our beloved [Maître]² Vincent de Paul, of the diocese of Dax, greetings in the Lord.

By these letters we grant you the special permission and faculty so that you may lawfully receive the Holy Order of Diaconate from any Catholic Archbishop, Bishop, or Prelate of your choice, at the time determined by law, provided that the person chosen is neither suspended nor separated from the Pontifical Office and is in favor and communion with the Holy Apostolic See. By virtue of this faculty, you may receive this Order; and the same Archbishop, Bishop, or Prelate may freely confer it on you, as on a person found suitably prepared, of legitimate age, and furnished with a valid title.

Given in Dax and signed by our own hand, with the seal of our vicariate and the signature of our undersigned registrar, December 11 in the year of Our Lord 1598.

G. DE MASSIOT, *aforesaid Vicar*

By proxy for the Vicar-General

DARTIGUELONGUE, *Registrar*, and with the seal.

Document 5. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, authenticated copy made on January 22, 1712, on the occasion of the process of beatification. The original is in Latin.

¹As indicated by these documents, sometime between September 10 and December 11, 1598, Jean-Jacques Dusault was appointed Bishop of Dax. Since, however, he had not yet been ordained a Bishop at this time, he could not ordain Vincent to the diaconate.

²Coste added the title *Maître*, (Master) which appeared on the second copy of this document but is not on the original because Saint Vincent did not receive this title until 1604. The use of this title before his name gives evidence of the educational level he attained; reference to his Licentiate in Canon Law specifies the area of his concentration. Besides being reserved for a person with a doctorate or a *licence* for teaching, *Maître* was also the term of address given to lawyers, magistrates, and master craftsmen.

6. - LETTERS FOR DIACONATE

(December 19, 1598)

We, Salvat Diharse, by divine mercy Bishop of Tarbes, make known to one and all that, on this Saturday of the Ember Days after the feast of Saint Lucy, in the month and year indicated below, while celebrating the general conferral of Holy Orders during High Mass in our cathedral church of Tarbes, we judged our beloved Vincent de Paul, of the diocese of Dax, satisfactory and suitable to be promoted, and we have promoted him according to the rites and canonically, to the Holy Order of Diaconate.

Drawn up and given in Tarbes, under our small seal dipped in red wax and with the signature of our undersigned secretary, December 19 in the year of Our Lord 1598.

S. DIHARSE, *Bishop of Tarbes*

By proxy for the Bishop of Tarbes

DE CASENAVE, *Secretary*, and with the seal.

7. - DIMISSORIAL LETTERS FOR PRIESTHOOD

(September 13, 1599)

Guillaume de Massiot, Bachelor of Pontifical Law, Canon of the cathedral church of Dax, and Vicar-General in spiritual and temporal affairs of the Most Reverend Father and Lord in Christ Jean-Jacques Dusault, by divine mercy Bishop of Dax, to our beloved Vincent de Paul, cleric of the diocese of Dax, promoted to the order of Deacon, greetings in the Lord.

Document 6. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, authenticated copy made on January 22, 1712, on the occasion of the process of beatification. The original is in Latin.

Document 7. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, authenticated copy made on January 22, 1712, on the occasion of the process of beatification. The original is in Latin.

By these letters we grant you the special permission and faculty so that you may lawfully receive the Holy Order of Priesthood from any Catholic Archbishop, Bishop, or Prelate of your choice, at the time determined by law, provided that the person chosen is neither suspended nor separated from the Pontifical Office and is in favor and communion with the Holy Apostolic See. By virtue of this faculty, you may receive this Order; and the same Archbishop, Bishop, or Prelate may freely confer it on you, as on a person found suitably prepared, of legitimate age, and furnished with a valid title.

Given in Dax, signed by our own hand and with the seal of the Chapter of Dax, and with the signature of our registrar inscribed below, September 13 in the year of Our Lord 1599.

G. DE MASSIOT, *aforesaid Vicar*

By proxy for the Vicar-General

DARTIGUELONGUE, *Registrar*, and with the seal.

8. - LETTERS FOR PRIESTHOOD

(September 23, 1600)

[We], François de Bourdeille, by divine mercy Bishop of Périgueux, make known to all that, on the day indicated below, while celebrating the general conferral of Holy Orders during High Mass in Saint-Julien Church in our Episcopal Residence,¹ we judged our beloved Vincent de Paul, deacon of the diocese of Dax, satisfactory and suitable and duly recommended to us by his own Bishop, in accord with what is contained in the dimissorial letters, to be promoted to the sacred Priesthood according to the rites and

Document 8. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, authenticated copy made on January 22, 1712, on the occasion of the process of beatification. The original is in Latin.

¹Today Château-l'Évêque, near Périgueux (Dordogne); the Bishop of Périgueux had his country house there, but it became his only residence as well as his "cathedral" because Saint-Étienne Cathedral and the episcopal palace, destroyed by the Protestants in 1577, had not yet been restored.

canonically, and we have promoted him in the Lord, with the supporting grace of the Holy Spirit.

Given in the aforesaid place, under our seal and the signature of our Secretary, inscribed below, on September 23, the Saturday of the Ember Days after the feast of the Holy Cross, in the year of Our Lord 1600.

By proxy for the Most Reverend Bishop²

J. JOURDANEAU, *Secretary*³

**8a. - SAINT VINCENT ASSUMES THE LEASE OF SAINT-LÉONARD
DE CHAUMES ABBEY**

(May 14, 1610)

Reverend Father in God Messire Paul Hurault de l'Hospital,¹ Archbishop of Aix and Abbot of Saint-Léonard de Chaumes Abbey, Order of Cîteaux,² in the Saintes diocese, residing at present on rue Coustellerie, Saint-Médéric parish, in this city of Paris, has recognized and acknowledged having given and relinquished and, by these letters, gives and definitely relinquishes taking any money from the farm, starting from the first day of this coming January un-

²Unlike the other ordination documents, this one does not bear the signature of the Bishop. The reason for its omission is unknown. We do know that François de Bourdeille died one month after the ordination. Could it be that he was incapacitated at this time, despite the fact that he was able to preside at a general ordination?

³The copy of the preceding ordination letters, preserved in the Archives of the Congregation of the Mission in Paris, is accompanied by the following note: "On October 20, 1604, all the aforesaid letters required for ordination to the priesthood of Vincent de Paul, named in them, were registered and recorded in the fourth *Registre des Insinuations Ecclesiastiques* of the Dax diocese."

Document 8a. - Archives Nationales, *Minutier Central*, Collection LXXXIV, vol. 52, fol. 265-66. The document was reprinted in *Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission* (1941), pp. 260-62. This edition uses the latter text.

The *Minutier Central* is a collection of the registers of the Paris notaries. There were still 87,745 volumes and dossiers extant in 1941, when it came into the possession of the National Archives.

¹Archbishop of Aix (1599-1624). In 1609 Nicolas Nicou, a monk of Cîteaux, had transferred Saint-Léonard Abbey to him.

²In 1568 the abbey had been transferred from the Benedictines to the Cistercians.

til the end of the next three years that follow. During the said period, he promises to guarantee and give the merchant Arnault Doziet,³ the present lessee, living on rue de Seine, Saint-Sulpice parish, faubourg Saint-Germain in Paris, the use, for the duration, of all the temporal revenue of the abbey; its appurtenances and outbuildings; rights and seignury; high, middle, and low justice; tax quotas; annuities; profits; fiefs; and generally any other things in any way or form whatsoever, retaining and reserving nothing, in any way or form whatsoever, for any reason other than what is specified and declared here, allowing the lessee to act, spend, and have the use of everything during the said period.

The present lease and act of leasing have gone into effect for the price and sum of 3,600 livres *tournois*,⁴ which the lessee has definitely promised, and does promise and pledge for each and every one of the said years to give and pay the seigneur the lessor or payee, in this city of Paris, in two equal installments between the feast of Saint John⁵ and Christmas Day, the first payment falling due on the feast of Saint John in the year 1611. He will continue to enjoy this, with the responsibility of having the chapel of the abbey, which is now in ruin, rebuilt so that by next January 1 the divine service may be chanted and celebrated there and, for this purpose, to place there two monks of the Order of Cîteaux. These will be named by the Abbot and accepted by the Abbot of Cîteaux; one of them will be the cloister Prior. They will be responsible for having the divine service recited, chanted, and celebrated daily and will be furnished with vestments and pewter chalices for this year, and, for the second, which begins on January 1, 1612, with silver chalices, a cross, and whatever is necessary for celebrating Mass and the other divine offices. They will be housed, fed, and maintained simply in accord

³A Paris merchant and guarantor of Saint Vincent's financial stability.

⁴Throughout this edition the various denominations of French money have been left in French, since no adequate, unchanging value in American dollars can be assigned. In the time of Saint Vincent, one écu equaled three livres; one thousand livres could support two priests and a Brother for one year on the missions (cf. VIII, 18, n. 2). The term *tournois* designates those livres minted in Tours and considered the purest standard by which the value of other coins was judged, e.g., a livre *parisien* had a smaller silver content.

⁵June 24.

with their vocation, will restore justice, and will establish there good, satisfactory, Catholic officers to carry out these functions correctly and faithfully and pay the wages of the officers, as well as all the tithes and former expenses with which the abbey may be bound and burdened.

Furthermore, during that time he will guarantee and pay the lessor for any major and minor repairs needed to maintain the house and buildings, to have the land duly worked and cultivated at the proper time and season, without loss or damage to it, to furnish and equip the houses and farms, to bring the cattle and do other things required to fertilize the land, seeing to whatever can be useful for the farm, to clear and till the land and convert the fodder it produces into silage to fertilize it near and far, to keep the fields neat and plowed, to cut the wood in due time and place according to ordinance, to rent and receive profit from the salt marshes and the houses that depend on it, as well as the other particular rights of the abbey, and to act in all this as a good father of a family, not transferring his right to the present lease to other persons without the consent of the lessor. Neither shall the lessee seek or demand any decrease or reduction from the farm because of war, plague, famine, or other troubles which may occur. The lessee will pay for this lease as indicated by the lessor; by the same token, the lessor may not, for any reason whatsoever, increase the price of the farm during that period of time.

Present for this was the chaplain of Queen Marguerite,⁶ Duchesse de Valois, the admirable priest Messire Vincent de Paul, originally from the parish in Pouy, diocese of Dax in Guyenne, now residing on rue de Seine in the house with the sign bearing the image of Saint Nicolas, in this city of Paris. He has been constituted and does constitute the pledge, guarantee, and respondent by the tenant, has promised and does promise with him, one for the other and each alone for everything, without reduction or disagreement concerning the division, order, and right of fidejussion concerning the benefices, to pay the said rent and carry out each and every clause and condition of the present lease, as if he were the principal lessee.

⁶The repudiated wife of King Henry IV.

And to comply with what is contained herein, the parties have taken up, and do take up their irrevocable residence, namely, the Archbishop at the house of Maître Antoine de la Loire, attorney at the Parlement,⁷ living on rue Quincampoix; and the lessee at the house of Maître Jean de la Thane, Master of the Mint in this city of Paris, living in the house of the Mint, in which place they desire, consent, and accept with the same effect, force, and quality as if they were in their own homes, all orders, summons, notifications, and other writs to be presented concerning the contents of this letter and whatever relates to it in the form of a principal case or appeal.

Thus . . . promising . . . binding⁸ each in his own right . . . the lessee and guarantor . . . , each for all and each for the other, without division or argument on the one hand, and the lessee and guarantor of the benefice on the other.

Drawn up and signed on Friday afternoon, May 14, 1610, in the house where the Archbishop resides, as stated above:

PAUL, *Arch[bishop of] Aix*
ARNAUT DOZIET
GRANDRYE¹⁰

VINCENT DEPAUL
MOTELLET⁹

⁷*Parlement* refers to the French judicial system. At the time of Saint Vincent, France had eight Parlements, each with its own legal jurisdiction, chief of which was the Parlement of Paris. They registered or gave sanction to the King's edicts, ordinances, and declarations, and supervised their implementation.

⁸Official notarized acts of the seventeenth century often concluded with the formula, in whole or in part: "promising . . . obliging . . . renouncing . . .," or the abbreviations "pr ob re," to express the beginning of a longer ending:

PROMISING that these present letters and all they contain are approved, binding, and stable forever, never contravening in any way. . . .

OBLIGING each individually and all collectively without division or discussion. . . .

RENOUNCING in so doing anything whatsoever contrary to these present letters and the law. . . .

⁹Jean Motelet, a notary in Paris.

¹⁰Pierre Grandrye, another Parisian notary.

9. - RESIGNATION OF SAINT-LÉONARD DE CHAUMES ABBEY
IN FAVOR OF SAINT VINCENT

(May 17, 1610)

I, the undersigned, Archbishop of Aix and Councillor of the King in his Council of State, publicly acknowledge having promised, and do promise Messire Vincent de Paul, counselor and chaplain of Queen Marguerite, Duchesse de Valois, to renounce in his favor my abbey of Saint-Léonard de Chaumes, Order of Cîteaux, Saintes diocese, if such is the good pleasure of His Majesty.

In consequence of this resignation, I agree that the titles and documents needed for entitlement to the rights and temporal revenue of the abbey be handed over to him either by M. de Lamet,¹ inhabitant of La Rochelle, who formerly enjoyed the use of the abbey, or by any other persons in whose hands the titles and documents may be found, and, for that purpose, I will furnish, if need be, all the necessary powers of attorney.

I also agree, in consequence of the above-mentioned resignation, that all the profits, rights, and revenues of the abbey and arrears from them be given and handed over to him, even the annual dues and property taxes retained by me, which I reserved for myself by the settlement with de Lamet, signed and acknowledged in the presence of the notaries on the . . .² day of last February. For this transaction and the rights belonging to me because of it, I have substituted, and do substitute the said M. de Paul in my name, for everything and for always, on the following conditions:

Namely, that I, the undersigned de Paul, promise to provide the Archbishop of Aix with a simple, non-litigious benefice, and rent

Document 9. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original, except for the last fragment, which is an authenticated copy. These documents were published by Louis Audiat in *Le Diocèse de Saintes au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: n.p., 1894), pp. 180-85. Of Saint-Léonard Abbey there remains only a farm, in the commune of Vérines, near La Rochelle (Charente-Maritime).

¹Gabriel de Lamet, a Protestant, was seigneur of Condun and of Cheusse and an alderman of La Rochelle. He had been named Abbot of Saint-Léonard on February 22, 1583, by letters patent of King Henry III, during the French Wars of Religion. The abbey's documents were still in his possession.

²The original has a blank at this point.

valued at twelve hundred livres given each year, all expenses included, on this side of the Somme and Loire Rivers.

I will be obliged to carry out and fulfill all this before the deadline of the last day of December 1613, for everything that will be fixed beforehand. Meanwhile, I will validly and actually consent to the creation in the Court of Rome of a pension of a similar sum of twelve hundred livres annually on the temporal revenue of the abbey, in compliance with the Bulls of appointment I will obtain from it and the signed document or Bull which will be especially registered for it, of such value that the person will be content with it, and especially in accordance with the letter of His Majesty, which I will be obliged to seek and obtain in the form transcribed below and not otherwise. The original of it will remain in the hands of the Archbishop until the benefice has been actually provided for him by me. All of this, in accord with the said documents, will, in fact, be paid to the Archbishop from the pension, and will be provided him annually in two equal payments at Christmas and on the feast of Saint John [the Baptist], beginning January 1 of next year.

I will be obliged to provide the Archbishop of Aix with the Bull or power of attorney for the creation of the pension within six months and before being able to take possession of the abbey in accord with the letters of appointment I will obtain for this. I will likewise be obliged to see that the pension of twelve hundred livres be paid, jointly and severally with me, by all the farmers who will be placed by me at the abbey, with its rights and members, and whose leases will make specific mention of this.

Nor shall the Archbishop claim any increase in the pension of twelve hundred livres for any reason whatsoever, even for lack of accurate knowledge of the rights of the abbey usurped during the civil wars.

Nor shall I be able to claim any reduction of the pension because of unproductiveness, damages, loss of titles, non-possession, and hostility, and generally for any other reason. All this is because later on I will be able to obtain to my own advantage several important rights belonging to the abbey, which have been usurped, and also

because, without these express and reciprocal clauses, the present agreement would not have been made.

I, the said de Paul, will be obliged to maintain the lease of the temporal revenue of the abbey given by the Archbishop to Arnault d'Ozier,³ a merchant in Paris, and signed in the presence of . . . ,⁴ notaries at the Châtelet of Paris on the fourteenth of this month and year, including what pertains to divine service, the number and support of the monks, chapel, vestments, repairs, and improvements in the abbey. All of these things will remain especially adapted to the divine service and the good of the house, whatever circumstances may arise afterward.

Furthermore, in consideration of the present agreement, and on condition that it be implemented by me and not otherwise, the Archbishop has forgiven me the cost of his Bulls, journeys, and copies, and the administrative expenses and proceedings in La Rochelle or in this city of Paris, instituted by him because of the abbey. I promise, if payment of the pension of twelve hundred livres is not made for one whole year and the requirements of the present agreement are not fulfilled point for point, to return and cede back to the Archbishop of Aix the abbey with all the profits from it that will be due to him at the time and, in addition, to pay off the expenses of the Bulls that it will be advisable for him to obtain once again, with our consent, up to the sum of one thousand livres, without claiming any fees already paid by me, and, for this reason, the Archbishop of Aix will be bound to refrain from serving me with any summons, notification, or order other than the simple contents of these present letters. Furthermore, the pension may not be transferred without my consent.

We have promised respectively to carry out all of the above in good faith, with no controversy or lawsuit. And for the implementation of this letter, circumstances, and dependencies, we have taken up our irrevocable residence in this city of Paris: I, the said Archbishop of Aix in the house of Messire Antoine de la Loire, attorney

³Arnault Doziet (cf. Doc. 8a, n. 3).

⁴The place for the names is blank on the original.

at the Parlement, located on rue Quincampoix in Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs parish; and I, the said de Paul, in the house of Messire Jean de la Thane, Master of the Mint of Paris, located on rue de la Monnaie, in Saint-Germain-de l'Auxerrois parish. In which places we will and consent that all notices that might be drawn up there for this purpose be considered as made to our own persons, property or rental transfers notwithstanding.

In witness whereof we have signed the present letters in Paris, this May 17, 1610.

PAUL, *Ar[cbishop of] Aix*

VINCENT DEPAUL

Today . . . ,⁵ the King being in Paris, and wishing to honor and treat favorably M. Vincent de Paul, counselor and chaplain of Queen Marguerite, Duchesse de Valois, His Majesty has accepted the desire of the Archbishop of Aix, Councillor of His Majesty in his Council of State, to resign in his favor Saint-Léonard de Chaumes Abbey, Order of Cîteaux, in the Saintes diocese, with the exception of a pension of twelve hundred livres, which, with the consent of the said de Paul, His Majesty wills and intends to be paid each year to the Archbishop from the profits and temporal revenues of the abbey, in accord with the Bulls or signed document of creation of the pension in the Court of Rome, which the said de Paul, by his own consent, will be obliged to obtain from it, as well as a special letter patent. His Majesty has commanded me to draw up all letters of nomination for it and other documents necessary for this, particularly the present letter patent, and has willed to sign it in his own hand and have it countersigned by me, his Councillor Secretary of State and of his commands.

PAUL, *Ar[cbishop] of Aix*

VINCENT DEPAUL

Today have appeared before the undersigned notaries of the King at the Châtelet of Paris, Reverend Father in God Messire Paul Hurault de l'Hospital, Archbishop of Aix and Abbot of

⁵The day is not indicated on the original.

Saint-Léonard de Chaumes Abbey, Order of Cîteaux, in the Saintes diocese, now residing on rue Coutellerie, Saint-Médéric parish, in this city of Paris, on the one hand; and the admirable priest Messire Vincent de Paul, chaplain of Queen Marguerite, Duchesse de Valois, residing in Paris on rue de Seine, in the house with the sign bearing an image of Saint Nicolas. Both have recognized and acknowledged having signed the names and signatures above, promising to maintain what is stipulated, without contravening it, and thereby have obliged each in his own right, with their property, etc.; renouncing, etc.

Drawn up and signed in the house of the Archbishop, Monday afternoon, May 17, 1610:

PAUL, *Archbishop* of Aix
GRANDRYE

VINCENT DEPAUL
MOTELET

Today, June 10, 1610, the King being in Paris and the Queen Regent his mother being present, His Majesty, desiring to please the Archbishop of Aix, has accepted the resignation the latter has made of Saint-Léonard de Chaumes Abbey, Order of Cîteaux, in the Saintes diocese, in favor of the priest Vincent de Paul, Bachelor of Theology, with the exception of twelve hundred livres annual pension payable from the revenue of the abbey.

In witness whereof, His Majesty has ordered me to draw up the present letters patent, which he willed to sign with his own hand and have countersigned by me, Secretary of State and of his commands and finances.

LOUIS

BRULART⁶

⁶Nicolas Brulart, Marquis de Sillery, Chancellor of France; he was the brother of Noël Brulart, Commander de Sillery.

**9a. - SAINT-LÉONARD DE CHAUMES ABBEY
AND PAUL HURULT DE L'HOSPITAL**

(May 28, 1611)

Present in person was Reverend Father in God Messire Paul Hurault de l'Hospital, Archbishop of Aix, Councillor of the King in his Council of State, residing in Paris, Place de Grève, Saint-Jean parish. In execution of the donation and transfer made here by him before Messire Georges Lenfant, *Sieur* de la Patrière, in the presence of the undersigned notaries this past June 23, 1610, of the pension of twelve hundred livres to be taken and received annually from the temporal revenue of Saint-Léonard de Chaumes Abbey, Order of Cîteaux, Saintes diocese, he has voluntarily recognized and acknowledged, and does recognize and acknowledge by these letters having promised, as he now promises *Sieur* de la Patrière, stipulating and accepting that, if *Sieur* de la Patrière is disturbed and harassed by anyone whomsoever in the collection and possession of the pension during his lifetime, *Sieur* de la Patrière shall enjoy the actual and factual possession of a similar lifetime pension of twelve hundred livres. For this purpose and for the reasons contained in the donation and transfer voluntarily constituted, issued, and allocated by this letter, he has promised and does promise to guarantee, provide, and see that it is profitable, creditworthy, and payable annually to *Sieur* de la Patrière on each and every one of his movable and immovable goods, now and in the future, especially on the temporal revenue of his archbishopric of Aix and other benefices of which he is now provided and possesses, or may have hereafter, and, for no reason whatsoever, may the pension cease or be revoked to the prejudice of *Sieur* de la Patrière during his lifetime, unless he is provided with a benefice of similar value of twelve hundred livres a year. To facilitate implementation of the allocation and constitution of the pension, the Archbishop has signed a special and irrevocable

Document 9a. - *Annales C. M.* (1941), pp. 262-65, published three notarized documents found in the Arch. Nat., *Minutier Central*, Collection LXXXIV, vol. 54, fols. 234, 235, and 269; all were signed on May 28, 1611. These documents attest to some of the problems the Saint encountered in 1611 and reveal the existence of several lawsuits in which he was involved.

power of attorney for *Sieur de la Patrière*, apart and separate from the present letters, to oblige Maître Vincent de Paul, counselor and chaplain of Queen Marguerite, and other debtors of the Archbishop, to pay any arrears on the pension, both those now due and to come due in the future, at the times and according to the terms they will be due. Promising . . . , binding. . . . Drawn up and signed in the house of the above-mentioned Archbishop, declared on the afternoon of May 28, 1611:

GRANDRYE

GEORGES LENFANT

MOTELET

PAUL, Arch[bishop] of Aix

In the presence of the undersigned notaries and attorneys of our Sire the King at his Châtelet of Paris, Reverend Father in God Messire Paul Hurault de l'Hospital present in person, Archbishop of Aix, Councillor of the King in his Council of State, residing in Paris, Place de Grève, Saint-Jean parish, has appointed and constituted as his special, irrevocable general proxy Messire Georges Lenfant, *Sieur de la Patrière*, for and in the name of the Archbishop, to obtain, pursue, send for, and receive annually from Messire Vincent de Paul, counselor and chaplain of Queen Marguerite, and all other tax farmers and debtors of the Archbishop, a pension of twelve hundred livres *tournois* payable annually on the first day of January, which payment for the first year will fall due on the coming January 1, 1612, and continue each year thereafter on the said day during the lifetime of *Sieur de la Patrière* for the pension of the Archbishop, given and handed over to *Sieur de la Patrière* to be taken from the temporal revenue of Saint-Léonard de Chaumes Abbey, Order of Cîteaux, Saintes diocese, by a contract signed by the undersigned not[ar]ies June 23, 1610, and to be constituted and allocated today by the Archbishop on all his movable and immovable goods now and in the future, especially on the temporal revenue of his archbishopric of Aix and other benefices with which he is provided and possesses now or may have hereafter. This is in accord with these clauses and the contract drawn up and signed this day before the undersigned notaries and on payment of the pension, to oblige Messire de Paul and all others, by every due and reasonable

legal means, with which they will be satisfied, to draw up and sign whatever receipts and discharges may be needed because of this and its consequences, and, if necessary, to litigate and raise objections, appeal, take up residence, and appoint in the name of *Sieur de la Patrière*, both for the plea and for whatever is said, one or several proxies having the above-mentioned authority or parts of it, and to revoke it if that seems good. Nevertheless, these present letters remain in force and generally. . . . Promising . . . , binding . . . , and renouncing.

Drawn up and signed in the offices of the undersigned notaries on the afternoon of May 28, 1611:

PAUL, *Arch[bishop] of Aix*,

GRANDRYE,

MOTELET

Before the undersigned notaries and attorneys of the King at the Châtelet of Paris, Messire Georges Lenfant, *Sieur de la Patrière*, residing in Paris with the Archbishop of Aix, Place de Grève, Saint-Jean parish, in the name and as proxy of the Archbishop, authorized by special and irrevocable general proxy, drawn up and signed today before the undersigned notaries, but not written into this letter to avoid prolixity, with the consent of the parties, has given, appointed, constituted, and established as proxy in place of the Archbishop, Messire Paul Tournemine, Chevalier de Camzillon de Chameville and gentleman-in-ordinary of the Privy Chamber. He has given and does give him power and authority to obtain, pursue, send for, and receive from Maître Vincent de Paul, counselor and ordinary chaplain of Queen Marguerite, and all other tax farmers and debtors of the Archbishop, the annual pension of twelve hundred livres *tournois*, given and transferred by the Archbishop to *Sieur de la Patrière*, to be taken during his lifetime from the temporal revenue of Saint-Léonard de Chaumes Abbey, Saintes diocese, by a contract signed before the undersigned notaries on June 23, 1610, and by the Archbishop today, to constitute and allocate from each and every one of his movable and immovable goods, now and in the future, especially from the temporal revenue of his archbishopric of Aix and other benefices with which he is and may hereafter

be provided and possess, and by yet another contract, drawn up and signed this day before the notaries to oblige the said M. de Paul and all others concerned to pay cash in accord with the contract of annuity, to draw up and sign any receipts and releases that will be needed and, if necessary, to litigate and raise objections, appeal, take up residence, and appoint generally. . . . Promising . . . , binding. . . .

Drawn up and signed in the offices of the undersigned notaries on the afternoon of May 28, 1611:

PAUL TOURNEMYNES GEORGES LENFANT MOTELET
GRANDRYE

10. - GIFT TO THE CHARITY HOSPITAL

(October 20, 1611)

Before the undersigned Pierre de Briquet and Denis Turgis, notaries and attorneys of our Sire the King at his Châtelet of Paris, was present and appeared in person Messire Vincent de Paul, Commendatory Abbot of Saint-Léonard Abbey in the region of Aunis, Saintes diocese, counselor and chaplain of Queen Marguerite, residing at the present time in this city of Paris, on rue de Seine, faubourg Saint-Germain-des-Prés, near the Queen's mansion. Because of his devotion and affection for Saint-Jean-Baptiste Hospital of the Order of Blessed John of God, founded by the Queen Regent in the faubourg Saint-Germain-des-Prés-lez-Paris; and in order to give the Prior and religious of the hospital greater means to nurse and care for the sick poor who come and go there daily to take refuge and to have their wounds dressed, to provide for them, to help the hospital pay off what is due on the rest of the building they have had constructed there, and to complete the construction so as to be able to offer suitable housing to the religious at the hospital, along with other good

Document 10. - Arch. Nat., Y 151, fol. 323, *Régistre des Insinuations* at the Châtelet.

An *Insinuation* is a parenthetical explanation or specification inserted into the original text of a legal document. The Grand Châtelet was the headquarters of the criminal jurisdiction of Paris; the Petit Châtelet was the Paris jail.

and holy considerations; he has, of his own free will, donated, given up, transferred, and by these letters donates, gives up, and transfers an outright, real, irrevocable donation *inter vivos* to the Prior and religious of Saint-Jean-Baptiste Hospital, founded in the faubourg Saint-Germain-des-Prés, with no expectation of revoking it.

Brother Gabriel Desartes, Prior of the hospital, here present, accepts the sum of fifteen thousand livres, which the priest who is the donor has stated and affirmed as belonging to him, with the right to transfer it from Messire Jean de la Thane, worthy Master of the Mint in this city of Paris, to whom the said sum belonged, by an Act signed before Choguillot and Tulloue,¹ notaries at the Châtelet, on the nineteenth of the present month and year, having also the right and transfer of it from Jacques Ducasse, worthy Master of the Mints of Navarre and Béarn, inhabitant of the city of Bordeaux, by a contract signed before the above-mentioned Choguillot and Tulloue this past June 18. This sum belonged to Ducasse, subrogated in place of and with the rights of François Treilles, Girault Treilles, Jean Mercadé, and Pierre Stabot, owners of the ship declared below. This sum of fifteen thousand livres *tournois* was owed by the King as compensation, the estimated value of a three-hundred-ton cargo ship from Biarritz called the *Domingue*, which was lost and sunk while fighting the Spanish, according to the report and estimate presented here in the presence of the Lieutenant General of the Seneschal's office of Guyenne.

In consequence whereof, Ducasse was appointed by letters patent of His Majesty, issued in Paris on March 20, 1599, and signed "for the King in his Council, Thuillier," verified in the *Chambre des Comptes* of this city of Paris by decree of December 9, 1599. These letters were addressed to Messire Balthazar Gobelin, Treasurer of the Bureau of Finances, in reference to a claim, dated January 20, 1595, made by the aforementioned Ducasse, with an order to pay the sum of fifteen thousand livres on the notification and decision given by the judges of the admiralty at the marble table of the Palais in Paris on October 21, 1594, including also the value and loss of the

¹Nicolas Choguillot and Denis Tulloue.

said vessel, mentioned in the decree of the *Chambre des Comptes*, dated May 17, 1599.

The donor has now given and handed over to the Prior all the above-mentioned letters, decrees, contracts, subrogations, and transfers, making him the holder of them and of the sum of fifteen thousand livres *tournois*, also given by him as the true claimant, plaintiff, proxy, recipient, and collector, placed and subrogated for him in everything within his right, titles, accounts, and shares for or by him and the religious of the hospital, to have and dispose of them as they will and as things belonging to them. This donation is made thus for the reasons mentioned above, as stated by the donor, in order to share in the prayers and good works of the hospital and also because the donor has willed and chooses to do so for other good and just reasons and considerations that prompt him.

And in order that these letters may be registered wherever there is need, both the donor and the Prior have made and constituted each other or the bearer of this letter their irrevocable proxy, giving him authority to draw up and present whatever Act will be needed. Promising . . . , binding . . . , renouncing, etc.

Drawn up and signed in the offices of the undersigned notaries on the afternoon of October 20, 1611. The aforesaid donor and Prior have signed the draft of the letter, together with the undersigned notaries, in the presence of Turgis, who is one of them.

BRIQUET TURGIS

11. - ACT OF TAKING POSSESSION OF THE PARISH OF CLICHY

(May 2, 1612)

On Wednesday afternoon, May 2, 1612, I, the undersigned, Thomas Gallot, cleric in Paris, civil servant now residing in Paris in the new quarter of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Licentiate in Pontifical

and Roman Law by apostolic authority, and sworn notary of the venerable episcopal curia and prefecture in Paris, in pursuance of the royal edict, by the force and authority of the certified signature of the apostolic letter of appointment to the parish church of Saint-Sauveur-Saint-Médard in Clichy-en-Garenne,¹ Paris diocese, drawn up by our Most Holy Lord Pope Paul V² and granted to the trustworthy man Maître Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese, Bachelor of the sacred science of Theology, upon the resignation of Reverend Maître François Bourgoing,³ lately or earlier the last and immediate uncontested Pastor of that same parish church in Clichy, or of Maître Bourgoing, legitimately constituted figure, on the basis of the edict proclaimed as follows: "Be it done as requested. C." and dated "Given at Saint Peter's in Rome November 12, in the seventh year of the pontificate" of the same Most Holy Lord Pope Paul V and transcribed in the proper form, appointed this same Reverend Maître Vincent de Paul, who personally appeared and requested it of me, to the corporal, real, and actual possession of the above-mentioned parish or parochial church of Saint-Sauveur-Saint-Médard in Clichy-en-Garenne, with free entry and departure in and out of the same parish church, the taking and sprinkling of holy water, the outpouring of prayers while kneeling, veneration of the image of the Crucified as well as the main, prominent altar of the church, kissing and touching the altar and the missal that is placed on the altar; touching also the sacrarium or tabernacle in which is kept and preserved the revered Body of Christ, and the baptismal font; sitting in the pew reserved for the Pastor in the choir of the church itself; ringing the bells; and other customary formalities duly observed in similar situations, together with free entrance and departure into and out of the rectory. I have likewise published and made known this taking possession effected by Reverend de Paul and the resignation of Reverend Bourgoing and have

¹Today, Clichy-la-Garenne.

²Paul V (1605-21).

³This predecessor of Saint Vincent in Clichy would succeed Father Charles de Condren as Superior of the Oratory in 1641.

done so publicly and clearly, according to the King's edict, without opposition or contradiction from anyone.

In addition, with regard to each and every one of the above matters, I, the aforesaid and undersigned notary, have permitted and granted that the Act be enforced and serve Reverend de Paul, who petitions and requests this of me for himself, in the appropriate place and time, in accordance with the law.

All of the aforesaid has been done in the church and rectory of Clichy-en-Garenne, in the presence of Maître Gilles Beaufile, priest and Vicar of the Chartres diocese, and of the following upright men: Jean Moreau, Registrar of the church and *Procureur Fiscal*⁴ of the place, Clichy; Jean du Mur; Jean Soret the elder; Jean Vaillant the elder; and Laurence Bega, parishioners and residents of the church, and others living in the village of Clichy, who have been called and sought as witnesses to the aforesaid matters.⁵

T. GALLOT

12. - ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF A DEBT

(December 7, 1612)

Present in person was the priest Messire Vincent de Paul, Abbot of Saint-Léonard, residing on rue de Seine, at Saint-Germain-des-Prés in this city of Paris, who acknowledges that he owes Messire Jacques Gasteaud, Doctor of Theology, now absent and living in La Rochelle, or the bearer here present, Messire Jacques Croppet, attorney at the Parlement court, stipulating and accepting for him, the sum of 320 livres *tournois*, as promised formerly by the said debtor

⁴Representative of the *seigneur* in a seigneurial court. Concerned primarily with the fiscal interests of the *seigneur*, he administered the levying of seigneurial dues.

⁵Saint Vincent was Pastor of Clichy from May 2, 1612 to 1626.

Document 12. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, copy made from the original in the possession of M. Julien Durand, 20 rue Cassette, Paris. Coste published only the first four and the last two lines. The document was folded, making almost an entire line illegible. In several instances the original is very difficult to read. The more complete version used here was furnished by Bernard Koch, C.M.

to Messire Gasteaud on December 7, 1611. This remains,¹ in consideration of reimbursement for this payment, since Croppet has now returned to the debtor and voluntarily repaid the 320 livres of the courayer² and for the said gentleman. The debtor has taken up and is taking up his principal and irrevocable residence in the house in which he is now residing, having to declare to what place he wills and consents to hear the plea and the coural³ and other Act of justice he consents to make, serve, and assert in such a way that, if it is necessary to write for a transcription and copy. . . . Promising . . . , binding . . . , renouncing.

Drawn up and signed in the office of the proxy on the afternoon of December 7, 1612:

	V. DEPAUL	CROPPET
TRONSON ⁴	C. DE TROYES ⁵	

12a. - APPOINTMENT AS PASTOR OF GAMACHES

(February 28, 1614)

Conferral of the parish church of the Gamaches deanery, Rouen diocese, left vacant by the death of the priest Reverend Maître Robert Salles, has been made by Reverend Guyon, Vicar-General of Rouen, on the admirable person of Maître Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese, for whom the magnanimous and powerful Lord Emmanuel de Gondi, ¹ Comte de Joigny and Baron of Plessis, Lieu-

¹Word difficult to decipher.

²Word difficult to decipher.

³Word difficult to decipher.

⁴Germain Tronson, a notary in Paris.

⁵A notary in Paris. Coste has *J. de Troyes* but lists him correctly in the index of vol. 14, p. 605, as *Claude de Troyes*.

Document 12a. - Departmental Archives of Seine-Maritime, G 9574, fols. 77v and 78, written in Latin; extract from the register of the Rouen archdiocese, which mentions the nomination of Vincent de Paul as Pastor and Dean of Gamaches (Eure) on February 28, 1614. The document was printed in *Mission et Charité*, 2 (1962), p. 495. This edition uses the latter text.

¹Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, husband of Françoise-Marguerite de Silly and General of the Galleys of France (cf. VIII, 34, n. 4).

tenant of the Most Christian King of France, and Prefect or General of the Galleys of the King on the eastern and western seas, has presented it. He has been examined, approved, and deemed suitable.

Drawn up in Rouen on Friday, the last day of February, 1614, before Maîtres Jean Coustel, notary of the archdiocesan curia of Rouen, and Michel Malassis, cleric residing in Rouen. . . .

13. - APPOINTMENT AS CANON OF ÉCOUIS¹

[1615-16]

A. On Wednesday, May 27, in the year of Our Lord 1615, the Chapter convened at the sound of the bell in the usual place in the church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Écouis, over which presided Maître Jacques Desmay, priest, Dean, and Doctor of Theology of the faculty of the Sorbonne, assisted by Maîtres Jean Fuvée the Cantor, Georges de la Faye, Jean Mallet, François Le Clerc, Charles de Framez, Jean Caron, and Vincent Gros moulu, priests and Canons.

The admirable Maître Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese and Bachelor of Theology, was represented before them by his proxy Maître Jean Morin, in accordance with the Act governing the use of proxies, delivered before André Le Nariel, notary apostolic and member of the university, residing in Paris, on the twenty-third day of the aforesaid month and year.

The aforementioned Morin presented to the Dean, Canons, and Chapter letters from the most noble and illustrious Lord Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, Lieutenant of the Most Christian King of France on the Galleys on the eastern and western seas, Comte de Joigny, Baron of Plessis near Écouis, and patron of the

Document 13. - Presbytery Archives of Écouis, eighteenth-century copy taken from the register of the Chapter deliberations, which is no longer extant. The editors have designated each entry A, B, C, etc. The first entry is in Latin; the remainder in French.

¹Locality in the district of Andelys (Eure). The history of the collegiate church of Écouis has been written by Louis Régnier, *L'Église Notre-Dame d'Écouis, autrefois collégiale* (Paris, n.p., 1913).

aforesaid church, who, by his own right and custom, conferred the benefices and office of Treasurer and Canon, remaining vacant in the church upon the death of Maître Jean Le Roux, the last undisputed possessor of these offices, all in accord with the letter of conferral, given in Paris on May 20 of the current year, signed "P. E. de Gondy," and bearing the coat of arms of the patron.

On the basis of the above, the proxy Morin requested that the above-named Dean and Chapter appoint or have Maître Vincent de Paul appointed to the real, personal, and actual possession of the aforesaid benefice and office of Treasurer and Canon.

Therefore, after reading out the terms of the aforesaid conferral and appointment, we, the Dean and the Canons, assembled in Chapter by the ringing of the bell at the appropriate time, have appointed Maître Vincent de Paul, represented by the priest Jean Morin his proxy, appearing here before us, to the personal, real, and actual possession of the benefice and office of Treasurer and Canon, all formalities required for this being fully observed and the rights of the Dean, Canons, and Chapter being safeguarded, provided that the aforesaid de Paul affirm by oath that he will observe everything contained in the foundation documents of the aforesaid church and all the constitutions pertaining to the office of Treasurer and the benefice of Canon, and will undertake all the duties consequent on acceptance of the office of Treasurer, both those from the original foundation and those subsequent to the foundation by Her Majesty Queen Clementia and the Dauphin Lord Humbert, published as being legitimately introduced.

He will also be required to declare in the church, in the presence of the above Dean, Chapter, and Canons, that there will be access in the future, without infringement of those rights conferred on them by the founder and assumed to be perpetual, to those powers in particular dealing with the acceptance or election by the patrons of one person from within the Chapter to the dignity and offices, as well as a substitute, when a vacancy should arise.

Given in our Chapter on the aforesaid day and year.²

²This first section is written in Latin.

Orders were given to write to the General in response to his letter; this was done in the following terms:

My Lord, we have received your letters and have carried out what was contained in them. We are sending to M. Vincent de Paul, tutor of your children, an extract from our Chapter registers, which will serve him as an Act of his taking possession of the office of Treasurer and Canon with which you have been pleased to provide him. May God grant him the grace to accomplish what we expect of him for the welfare and embellishment of your church! May the presence of benefice holders cause the divine service to be carried out with greater honor in your church, where we will continue to entreat the Divine Goodness to assist you and Madame, as well as your children, with His grace. We remain, My Lord, your most humble spokesmen and servants.

The Dean, Canons, and Chapter of Écouis

From the Chapter of Écouis, May 27, 1615.

B. This Wednesday, September 16, 1615, the General Chapter met, etc.

The priest Maître Vincent de Paul, Bachelor of Theology and the current Treasurer of this church, having previously taken possession of the office of the Treasurer by proxy, presented himself in person to take the oath of fidelity; this he did and affixed his signature. He swore to assume the responsibilities included in a previously written document, asking to take on these responsibilities. This was granted him; he gave the *osculum pacis*,³ and invited everyone to dinner tomorrow, the anniversary of the dedication of this church, *pro suo jucundo adventu*,⁴ observing the custom of this Chapter.

³Kiss of peace.

⁴[To celebrate] his happy arrival.

C. Wednesday, April 20, 1616, the Chapter convened, with the Cantor presiding. In attendance were Messieurs de la Faye, Mallet, Le Clerc, Nourquier, Caron, Grosmoulu, and Dupré. The Chapter met at the request of the noble and powerful seigneur Messire Pierre de Roucherolles, Baron of Pont-Saint-Pierre, Marigny, and Dampierre, and co-patron of the local church and collège. At this meeting he represented to the Chapter that he could not conceal the fact that he was unable to maintain the foundation in conformity with the solemn promises he had formerly made on the occasion of his taking possession of the patronage of the church and collège to fulfill the obligation of the upkeep and maintenance of the foundation, as the Chapter had had him promise and swear on the foundation and the Holy Gospels. To his way of thinking, the foundation was being infringed upon to such a degree that the entire ruin of the church and foundation were threatened, especially because all the Canons in general were, in fact, supposed to reside there, which, at the same time, Messieurs Desmay the Dean, de Paul the Treasurer, and Blondel the Canon were contravening. He declared that the gentlemen were absent without his consent; consequently, as far as he was concerned, he was trying to do all he could to set things in order. To achieve this, however, in accord with the foundation, the absence of the gentlemen in question had to be settled by the Chapter, for which purpose he had been brought here specifically, and was now calling upon the Chapter, enjoining it, in the name of God, to proceed in this very important matter on an equal footing with him, since it had the same interest in it and a similar obligation. He was requesting this so that, on the decision that would be made, he might see how to remedy the situation according to God and his conscience, and his demand and proposal in this matter be acted upon. Having stated all that, the seigneur left.

When the vote was taken on what had been presented, it was unanimous, acceding to the declaration and request of the seigneur and patron. Orders were also given that, at the next General Chapter, which will take place on the Wednesday following the upcoming feast of Pentecost, Messieurs Desmay, Dean; de Paul, Treasurer; and Blondel, a Canon, will come to explain or will send

the reasons for their non-residence and will accede to the request of the seigneur and patron. And in order that the said gentlemen may not claim ignorance of the present demand and order, the notary of the Chapter is instructed to send them a copy of the present demand and order within eight days and to deliver to the seigneur and patron a copy of the proceedings of all of the above.

D. Wednesday, May 18, the assembled Chapter, with the Cantor present, etc.

I, Frédéric Le Roux, priest-chaplain of the collegial church of Notre-Dame d'Écouis, certify to whom it may concern that I have properly and duly notified by a copy sent to the Dean, the Treasurer, and Blondel, requesting them to appear or to send their reasons for non-residence to this Chapter or to the General Chapter, which will meet on the Wednesday after the feast of Pentecost. This is in accord with the orders of this Chapter of last April 20, 1616. I attest that I have done this and that it is true.

Drawn up this May 18, 1616.

E. Wednesday, May 25, 1616, the General Chapter met, with the Dean presiding, and attended by the Cantor and Messieurs La Faye, Mallet, Le Clerc, Nourquier, Framez, Blondel, Caron, Grosmoulu, and Dupré.

M. Mallet presented a letter sent by the General's wife⁵ and Le Roux, tax collector of the Duc de Retz, co-patron of this church, and another from the seigneur and co-patron. After these had been read, it appears that they . . .⁶ the presence of M. de Paul, Treasurer of this church, another two weeks and that the decision on his case be delayed until that time. When the Chapter had deliberated on this, it granted them what they were requesting by their letters and ordered that the letters be kept in the clerk's office and notification of the present ruling given to Le Roux, tax collector of the said seigneur and co-patron.

⁵Françoise-Marguerite de Silly, Madame de Gondy (cf. II, 15, n. 1).

⁶The copy has a blank space here.

14. - SERMON ON THE CATECHISM

I am not here in the pulpit to preach a sermon to you, as is customary, but to tell you something about the catechism because the Comte¹ wished me to do so, with the permission of the Pastor . . .² for a little discussion with them concerning matters of faith, while he is here, knowing that God has established seigneurs not simply to collect the dues and taxes of their subjects, but to administer justice to them, maintain religion, and help them to love, serve, and honor God and to learn His holy Will.

Even though the purpose of all preaching is to draw souls to heaven, those who have written treatises on it have remarked that there are three kinds: one for teaching, another for exhorting, and a combined one for teaching and exhorting together. The one for teaching has matters of faith as its subject matter; the one for exhorting deals with virtue and vice; and the combined one includes both teaching and exhorting; that is, it teaches matters pertaining to faith and imparts love of virtue and a horror of vice. The first is for those who do not know what they should know; the second is for those who do know but need to become good; and the third is for those who are not too well-instructed and have to be drawn away from vice and incited to virtue. The first is called catechizing and concerns little children and unbelievers; the second and third concern Catholics who are already adults but have had no instruction.

We will not deal with the last two because you usually have sermons aimed at that, but we will speak about the first, which is to catechize, that is, to instruct little children; still, we assure the adults

Document 14. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original autograph document. This sermon seems to have been written between 1613, the year of Saint Vincent's entrance into the de Gondi household, and 1616, the year of his resignation of Saint-Léonard de Chaumes Abbey. It was most likely closer to 1616.

¹Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, Comte de Joigny.

²This omission is a good example of the development of Saint Vincent's thinking: he wrote two passages here; the first, "... and that is because, when he saw the youthfulness of your town these past few days, properly. . ." he crossed out; the second reads, "and that is because, noticing your youth with regard to the letters and arms in the overture you made to him, he wanted to see how they had advanced in the faith. . . ." In the end, he apparently did not include either one of them.

that they will learn much from it. *Whoever believes*,³ etc. *Without faith, it is impossible to please Him*.⁴ *Whoever wishes to be saved must, before all else, hold to the Catholic faith*.⁵

The catechism is this little book you see, in which is contained what a Christian is obliged to know and believe. It has been drawn up for the instruction of the people, so that they may know what they should know and do. It teaches who merits the name of Christian, the purpose for which we have been created, that there is one God in three Persons and three Persons in one God, the Commandments of God and of the Church, the sacraments and Christian practice, in a word, all we are obliged to know, condensed in such a small volume and in such a way that people will learn it in a short time.

The purpose for which it was drawn up in the beginning was to instruct unbelievers, but since then it has had to be used with Christians themselves, and the clergy are supposed to teach it to little children because the parents and godparents who are supposed to teach them the truths of faith do not do their duty as they should. In addition, many of them are greatly hindered from doing so because they themselves have not been instructed, and, because of this, most souls are on the road to perdition. *Anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned*.⁶

And do not think that this is something new in the Church. Origen, who lived in the year 200 under Severus, taught the catechism; Saint Basil, who lived under Julian the Apostate in 350;

³Cf. Mk 16:16. (NAB). Coste has *Whoever believes*. The original has *Whoever does not believe*. This and other references from the Bible are written in Latin in the original; their translation is given in italics in the English text. Saint Vincent often uses scriptural references which, however, are not always direct quotes. Where he has done so, the translation has been adjusted to flow with the meaning of the sentence. The quotations given in the footnotes are usually taken from the *New American Bible* (NAB), unless a passage cannot be found in that edition or a more suitable rendering of the phrase is found elsewhere. In such instances it has been thought that the *Douay-Rheims Bible* (D-RB) gives greater clarity because it is closer to what Saint Vincent used and wrote. In the case of the psalms, both versions are sometimes cited because of the variations in numbering.

⁴Cf. Heb 11:6. (NAB)

⁵Athanasian Creed. Coste's text stops at "faith"; the original continues with "which otherwise, etc."

⁶Cf. Mk 16:16. (NAB)

Ambrose, under Theodosius in 320; Saint Augustine, under Arcadius and Honorius in the year 400; and Saint Cyril of Alexandria in the year 430, under Valentinian III—all of them taught the catechism as I do today. They have written entire books because they were mindful that some Christians are spiritual and others are sensual, attending a great deal to bodily matters but little to those of the soul, and that it was also necessary for little children.

But what am I saying? Did not Our Lord Himself, the Son of God, prepare the way to instruct little children and to catechise them in a certain sense when, in Saint Matthew 19, He preached to the Jews and Apostles who tried to keep the little children from coming to Him. He was careful not to allow this and said, *Let the children come to me. Do not hinder them. The kingdom of God belongs to such as these.*⁷ And embracing them, He blessed them. He gave them Guardian Angels: *Their angels in heaven constantly behold my Father's face.*⁸ He made them suitable heirs of heaven, *Of such,* etc. He gives a stiff punishment to those who will scandalize them. Those who welcome them, welcome Him. These are the prerogatives He has given to little children, if we are to believe the Gospel. And He said, *Amen, amen I say to you, unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, he is greater in the kingdom of heaven. And he that shall receive one such little child in my name, receives me. But he that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck.*⁹

As for its necessity, we all know that; I will let you yourselves be the judges of that, namely, whether all know what they should believe. Is it not true that ignorance is so great that I have been with Catholics and other Christians who, when I asked if they knew the Commandments of God, replied that they had never been to school, and others that they could read them in the prayers? O what crass ig-

⁷Cf. Mt 19:14. (NAB)

⁸Cf. Mt 18:10. (NAB)

⁹Cf. Mt 18:3-6. (NAB)

norance! O what diabolical blindness that we have reached the stage where a Christian does not know what he believes!

Even if there were nothing other than seeing that our enemies the Huguenots¹⁰ have taken our weapons from our hands to destroy us with them, should we not take them back to defend ourselves from them? For do you know how carefully they teach it and learn it? So much so that they teach it to their children every Sunday afternoon and in such a way that there is not one of them who cannot justify his faith and discuss it pertinently or, to put it better, pertinaciously. Persons bitten by an asp seize the asp, crush it over the wound, and are healed in this way. The Huguenots use the catechism to destroy our faith. Let us seize the same catechism and crush it over the wound.

Its usefulness is infinite. First of all, the catechism teaches us faith. It helps us to put our hope in God in our adversities. It helps us to love and fear God and our neighbor, makes us firm against the temptations of the devil, strengthens us against the enemies of the faith, and ultimately obtains paradise for us.

Above all, you mothers and fathers, know that your children will be much more obedient to you than they now are.

How do you think Italy has preserved the faith in its purity except through the catechism? And how about Spain? And how have Canada, Peru, and Brazil been brought to the faith except through the catechism? Furthermore, how do you think we preserve the faith in France, where there are Huguenots, except through the catechism, as in La Rochelle?¹¹ O what a thing worthy of a great people! There are around fifteen hundred Catholics in La Rochelle, and all the rest belong to the [reformed] religion. Fifteen or sixteen years ago those Catholics did not know what they believed, until God sent a good Doctor there, who began to catechize the children and did it so well that gradually, by the grace of God and that little catechism, he made these people so good that I myself am ashamed when I am with them and see how they outdo me in charity.

¹⁰Cf. VII, 85, n. 3.

¹¹The Huguenots (cf. VIII, 31, n. 2) in France were strongest in this town and the surrounding area.

People will object to me, "What does your catechism have to do with us? We are Christians, for we go to church, hear Mass and Vespers, go to confession at Easter; what else is needed?" Nowhere in all of Holy Scripture have I found that it is sufficient for a Christian to hear Mass and Vespers and go to confession, but I have found in it that anyone who does not believe in all that comes within the scope of faith is not saved. Then, too, what profit is drawn from the Mass by someone who does not know what it is, or from confession by someone who does not know what it involves?

The disposition we need is the same as is required for a receptacle to preserve the excellence of a liquid. First of all, the bottle must be clean, earthenware, and stoppered. Your hearts are receptacles, and Christian doctrine is the liquid. Just as a receptacle that is dirty on the inside will not preserve the liquid in its purity, in the same way a child who is proud, greedy, and obstinate will not preserve doctrine in its purity. If the receptacle is cracked, the liquid flows out. Thus, if you are thinking about something else when you are at catechism, you are a cracked receptacle and do not retain what you are being taught. So then, those who want to learn must renounce vice and sin, which are like the dirt of the soul, and in a short time they will praise God for having learned what they will be learning and would not want it otherwise for anything in the world.

Consequently, I exhort the fathers and mothers here present who have children, to send them to it and to come to it themselves. Think how sorry you will be one day if you and your children are damned for not knowing what it is necessary to know, when you even have such easy means to do so.

The order I will follow for teaching will be so easy that everyone will be capable of it, the uninstructed as well as the learned, and the humble as well as important persons, rejecting all sorts of vain, useless questions and all needless inquiries.

There is a story about a Doctor who asks a child if he or she is a Christian. The child answers "Yes, by the grace of God." When you, dear little children, say "Yes, by the grace of God," [you are saying] that it is God alone who made you Christians by His grace, and not because you have merited it, nor was it your father who

made you Christian, but you are indebted to God alone for this, who could have had you born of a pagan. You will learn also that it is not a person's learning that makes him a Christian, but God. *By the grace of God I am what I am.*¹²

15. - SERMON ON HOLY COMMUNION

We must not receive the Body of Our Lord unworthily. This must be demonstrated in its proper place.

The Eternal Father showed how carefully we must prepare ourselves to receive our Creator into our souls, since He Himself, when sending Him into the world, willed to prepare for Him a palace filled with every perfection, namely, the virginal womb of His Blessed Mother. The Holy Spirit also willed to show the same respect that one should have for the Body of Our Lord, since, having rejected the ways of nature for the formation of this body, He willed to be Himself the workman, by taking the most pure blood of the Virgin.

If the Father and the Holy Spirit were so willing to contribute to this preparation, how much should we contribute to it when God wills to grant us this grace of communing with Him, considering the situations of the one who receives and of the Person received: the latter is infinite and all-powerful; the former, on the contrary, is a poor earthworm and a simple puff of smoke! Neither should we excuse ourselves because the matter seems to demand great paraphernalia and extraordinary care corresponding to such an extraordinary act as this. No, all that is needed is a ready heart, a disregard for any past superficiality, a keen understanding of the great love God has shown us in this sacrament, and a reciprocal, corresponding love on our part, all of which occurs without moving from

¹²Cf. 1 Cor 15:10. (NAB)

Document 15. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original autograph document. This sermon appears to be only a rough outline of Document 16; the two were written one after the other. The handwriting has many more touches of similarity with the first two letters of Saint Vincent, written in 1607 and 1608 (cf. I, 1-15) than with those that followed.

a place. Consequently, it is not necessary to go to the Indies or to cover oneself with dust and ashes to win this great benefit. The poor farmhand has to earn his living by the sweat of his brow. The merchant¹ crosses the sea to gain a little silver, which, more often than not, he loses in a heavy sea. Here, however, where it is question of a gain—not of a little bread, not of a little white, refined earth, as is silver, but of all the treasures in the world—only the absolute devotion of one's heart is necessary, for it is not to receive some medicinal concoction, which can do as much harm as good; it is not to eat a dinner, which affects only this wretched carcass of the body; but rather to eat the Food of the soul, which is going to live forever.

For this purpose, the night before His Passion, Our Lord instituted this august sacrament, the true basis and center of religion, by a solemn testament He made in the presence of the Apostles. He recognized that only by leaving us His Body could He express sufficiently the love He had for us. He did so in order that, being reconciled to God by His Passion and death, we may feel the daily effects of this through the reception of His Body, since our wretchedness is so great that, were there not some antidote for our souls, we would easily allow ourselves to be swept along by our evil inclinations and our corrupt, depraved instinct.

O worthy and admirable Institution, you who surpass the human capacity for understanding, which angels can only admire, and no language can express nor any intelligence grasp; how worthy you are of great veneration that an infinite God so wills to abase Himself as to allow Himself to be contained in a finite creation, which only heaven can comprehend; who, borne on the wings of the wind, wills to condense His admirable grandeur in a poor, insignificant soul, that the very sun draws its splendor into a small, hollow cavity of the human breast! No! This cannot even be conceived; for, is there anything so extraordinary in this world? We do see a father leave his estate to his children and expose himself to danger of death for their preservation, but there is none who gives them his own body to eat.

¹Coste has *méchant* [wicked]; this was subsequently corrected to *marchand* [merchant].

Taking these things into consideration, then, what punishment does a person deserve who receives Him unworthily! The child who has put obstacles on a step to trip his father who is coming down in all good faith is liable to be disinherited according to the law, and those who simply plot the death of the King are subject to death. All the more reason should this apply to those who would want to receive their God into a soul filled with vileness and filth! Ancient tyrants used to attach a living body to a corpse to cause the person to die a thousand times in one moment. The person who wants to place his living Creator in his soul that is dead through sin does the same thing!

Oh! How very happy are they who eat Him as they should. For, in the first place, the infinite merits of the Passion of Our Lord are applied to them. The foul, tainted soul has become clean and pleasing to God and, from being inhabited by the demons, becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit and the throne of the Divinity. On the contrary, however, those who receive Him unworthily are guilty of the Passion and death of Our Lord and, consequently, are deserving of eternal fire in the other world and, in this world, of the punishment mentioned by Saint Paul, namely, sickness, poverty, and death before their time. For, I ask you, what indignity to Our Lord and to the angels who attend Him to want to put them together with the devil! Which of us would not be extremely sorry if, going to see a friend who had invited him, would be put in a room with one of his enemies who would already be there with swords and daggers!

The person who wishes to put Him with the devil does the same thing.

16. - SERMON ON HOLY COMMUNION

We must not receive the Body of Our Lord unworthily.

God, the creator and sovereign architect of all things, having created the human person in His own image and likeness, composed of

body and soul, has, by the same means, created a sustenance for the maintenance of the body and instituted another for the nourishment of the soul. The food of the body is bread and wine; that of the soul is the Body of Our Lord because, just as the body cannot subsist without material sustenance, neither can the soul be in the state of grace without nourishment.

This food was instituted by Our Lord on the night before His Passion, in the presence of His Apostles. After He had eaten, seeing that He had to undergo the ordeal of the Cross, He took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to His Apostles, saying to them: "Take this, this is my body; do this in memory of me." That evening, He fulfilled what He had predicted long before in Saint John, chapter 6,¹ where He declared indeed that, if they did not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, they would not have life in them, that anyone who eats His flesh and drinks His blood will have eternal life and He will raise him up on the last day, and that the bread He was to give would be the flesh He would give for the life of the world. From this we conclude that we will rise and will have eternal life through the merits of His flesh and that, consequently, no one can have either grace or eternal life unless he nourishes his soul with this celestial food. Because, however, receiving it is not everything but it must be received well, and because, as Saint Paul says, those who receive it unworthily are guilty of His death, all Christians must therefore know and be informed of how important it is to receive Him worthily. This will be clearly seen by what follows.

The Eternal Father foresaw from all eternity the fall of man, the way by which he would make himself unworthy of paradise. Being all-good and all-merciful, He proposed sending His own Son into this world to assume responsibility for mankind and to become the guarantee and the one answerable for our sins, both to appease divine justice and to show us the way to be most pleasing to Him. Since, however, God is the Father of Providence, and the function of Providence is not only to think about the purpose but to indicate

¹The account of the miraculous multiplication of loaves and fishes and Our Lord's lengthy discourse on the Bread of Life, the Holy Eucharist.

the means to attain it, thus it is that, by foreseeing and decreeing that He would send His Son here below, He also determined the means to achieve it.

He foresaw, therefore, that, since His Son had to take on human flesh through a woman, it was fitting that He take it through a woman worthy of receiving Him, a woman outstanding in grace, free of sin, filled with piety, and removed from all evil attachments. He brought before His eyes, then, all the women who were already living at that time and those who were to come and found none worthy of this great work except the Most Pure and Most Immaculate Virgin Mary. So, that is why He decided from all eternity to prepare that dwelling place for Him, to adorn it with the rarest and most worthy benefits that no other creature possessed, in order that it might be a temple worthy of the Divinity, a palace worthy of His Son.

If the eternal foresight searched so far to discover this receptacle of His Son and, having found it, adorned it with all the graces that could embellish the creature, as He Himself declared by the angel He sent her as His ambassador, how greatly should we anticipate the day and the disposition required to receive Him! In addition, how carefully should we adorn our souls with the virtues required for this great mystery, and what devotion should we acquire! The Holy Spirit did not will that this action take place without contributing His own to it, and willed to choose the most pure blood of the Blessed Virgin for the conception of this body. The angels made the air resound with hymns and praises when He came into the world; Saint John paid homage to Him while He was still in His mother's womb; the Magi, who represent human knowledge, contributed their gratitude as well; the shepherds, symbolizing simplicity, also brought their reverence to Him. But here is something unusual: what shall we say about the irrational animals? They did not want to be left out of this acknowledgment. What is even more unusual, however, is that inanimate things, who have no gratitude, made an effort in nature to have some so that they, too, might add to it their faith and homage.

If God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, the angels, little children, persons of great dignity and exceptional knowledge; if the simple people, the irrational animals, and inanimate things contributed to the birth of the Son of God—some to foresight, some to the work, others to preparing themselves—each [according] to his *savoir-faire*—how much more should we foresee, work, and prepare ourselves to receive this same Creator. Should not all our senses tend toward that? In so doing, we should banish from our minds at that time all thoughts except that of God, banish from our understanding all knowledge, and from our will all love but that of God, bearing in mind who we are and whom we are receiving, that we are only earthworms, a puff of smoke, a sack of rubbish, and the cave of a thousand bad thoughts; and that Our Lord, on the contrary, is an eternal, infinite being, the splendor of glory, the fountain and source of all grace and beauty. And yet, O Divine Goodness! despite all that He does not ask for the magnificence of the banquet of Ahasuerus nor the preparation he demanded of his wives six months before they were to sleep with him, but simply asks that we give Him our hearts and hope for no other love than His and that of our neighbor.

There is, then, no difficulty nor any kind of pain for those who prepare for this. The pain is for those who, with souls eaten away and filled with decaying, perishable attractions of the flesh and of the goods of this world, have, like a Prometheus,² a deep regret gnawing at their souls because of their unworthiness, unpreparedness, and lack of devotion when they approach this sacred banquet.

The person who has to receive someone more important than himself takes great pains and the utmost care in thinking about how to receive him worthily. He gets his home ready, cleans it, lays down a rug, puts it in order, and gives instructions that nothing be unattractive in it. He must send to the butcher for meat, have someone go hunting for venison, and a thousand other details. For Our Lord, however, none of that is necessary—no work, no inconvenience—but, without moving, each can prepare, simply thinking in

²In Greek mythology, because Prometheus stole fire from heaven and gave it to mankind, he was punished by being chained to a rock, where each day an eagle came and gnawed at his liver.

his heart of how to empty the rubbish from his soul by contrition and making a firm resolution not to offend God any longer.

17. - RESIGNATION OF SAINT-LÉONARD DE CHAUMES ABBEY

(October 29, 1616)

Before the undersigned Philippe Richer and Jacques Fardeau, notaries and attorneys of our Sire the King at his Châtelet of Paris, the noble and admirable priest Messire Vincent de Paul, present in person and living in Paris on rue des Petits-Champs, Saint-Eustache parish,¹ recognized and acknowledged, and does recognize and acknowledge, having donated, relinquished, handed over, transferred, and given up, and does donate, relinquish, hand over, transfer, and give up, from now and for always, to the noble person here present and accepting, Messire François de Lanson, priest, counselor, and chaplain of the King, and Prior of Saint-Étienne d'Ars Priory on the Île de Ré, living in Paris on rue des Cordiers,² Saint Étienne-du-Mont parish, by an irrevocable donation made *inter vivos* and in the best possible form, with, however, no guarantee that this has been done only by a promise, each and every right, nomination, justification, lawsuit, petition, order, and restitution of benefits and other things without exception that are due or will fall due, present and to come, decided and to be decided, which the said donor may have claimed and may claim and request because of the use he formerly enjoyed as Abbot of Saint-Léonard de Chaumes Abbey and true titular of the abbey, in opposition to any persons whomsoever, both because of the restitution of the benefits and temporal revenues of the said abbey, which the said M. de Paul claims are due to him and for which he had instituted several lawsuits against various holders and usurpers of the domain of the ab-

Document 17. - Arch. Nat., Y 157, fol. 383, *Régistre des Insinuations* at the Châtelet.

¹At the time, Saint Vincent was living in the home of Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondî, General of the Gallies; he would later move with the family to rue Pavée. (Arch. Nat., Y 156, fol. 213v.)

²A short street beginning at rue Saint-Jacques, and ending at the street today called rue Victor-Cousin.

bey alone, as well as anything else, in any manner or form whatsoever, pertaining to the benefits and revenues of the abbey, for which the donor formerly instituted various lawsuits against several persons, both before the tax collectors of the palace as before others, and for the restitution of the benefits the said M. de Lanson may claim because of the abbey, even from the time when M. de Paul was its Abbot, together with all costs, expenditures, damages, and interest that might be awarded to the donor against the holders and usurpers of the domain of the abbey, whatever sum to which all this may amount; without excepting, retaining, or reserving anything, for this purpose making M. de Lanson the true claimant, plaintiff, pursuer, recipient, and collector.

For all this he has certified, put, and substituted him, and does put and substitute him in his place, for every right, nomination, justification, and lawsuit so that, by means of these letters, the said de Lanson may pursue and recover payment of them and act and dispose of it as belonging to him. This donation, assignment, and transfer is made because of the deep affection the donor says he has and maintains for the donee, the sincere expressions of friendship he has received from the donee, and because such is his will. And, in order to have the present donation registered whenever necessary and in whatever place it is needed according to the ordinance, the donor and the donee, in the absence of one or the other, have substituted the bearer of the present letter as their irrevocable proxy and have given him authority and power to do everything pertaining to this matter that will be required and necessary, promising and binding, renouncing without exception, etc.

Drawn up in the house of the aforesaid donee, on the afternoon of October 29, 1616.³ The draft of this letter was left with the said Fardeau and was signed by Richer, Vigne, and Fardeau.

Saturday, January 25, 1617, the present contract of donation was brought to the registrar's office of the Châtelet of Paris and was registered, accepted, and approved with the responsibilities, clauses,

³On that date the abbey was in much the same state as it was in 1610, when Saint Vincent assumed responsibility for it.

and conditions affixed to it, sealed, and contained in it, by Jacques Ceyffat, bearer of the contract.

**18. - RESIGNATION OF THE PARISH OF CHÂTILLON
IN FAVOR OF SAINT VINCENT**

(April 19, 1617)

Reverend M. Jean Lourdelot, priest, personally constituted Pastor of the parish church of Saint-Martin in Buenens and of its annex, Saint-André Church in Châtillon in the Lyons diocese, has freely and on his own initiative made and constituted, and by this document does hereby so make, create, and constitute . . .¹ as his general and special proxies, in their absence just as if they were present, with no abrogation or diminution of general or special powers, and specifically and expressly so constitutes any one of them with full powers for the following purpose: in his name and on his behalf as the one constituting them willingly, freely, and without reservation or condition, to give up and resign into the hands of his Ordinary our Most Reverend Archbishop of Lyons, or his Vice-Chancellor, or of our Most Holy Father the Pope, or anyone else holding authority in this matter, the aforesaid parish church which he now possesses, in favor of Monsieur . . .,² but not in favor of any other person or in any other way; and also to swear that it was his intention as he constituted them that there was no fraud in this resignation, and there will be no trickery, sin of simony, or any unlawful agreement, and that all those things will be done which he, as the constituting party, would do if he were present. And he guarantees on oath that he agrees with and ratifies everything and whatever shall have been said or done by his aforesaid proxies in the preparatory steps as well

Document 18. - Arch. Dép. du Rhône, *Insinuations ecclésiastiques*, reg. 81, fol. 92v, original in Latin. The document was published by Philippe Cordenod in *Saint Vincent de Paul à Châtillon-les-Dombes* (Bourg: J. Dureuil, 1908, p. 12, n. 1).

¹The space for the names was left blank.

²On April 19 Jean Lourdelot still did not know in whose favor he was resigning the parish of Châtillon.

as in the binding statements, relinquishments, and submissions required in such actions.

This document was drawn up in Lyons, at the house of the Congregation of the Oratory, on April 19, 1617, in the presence of Joseph Maurice and Joseph Dumont, clerics living in Lyons, who were called to act as witnesses.

LOURDELOT

JOSEPH DUMONT JOSEPH MAURICE

And I, a sworn notary of the Archdiocese of Lyons, have recorded this document.

MICHAUD

19. - APPOINTMENT AS PASTOR OF CHÂTILLON

(July 29, 1617)

Thomas de Meschatin La Faye, [Head of the Household and Count of the church in Lyons, Counselor in the Court of the Parlement of Dombes, Officialis and Vicar-General in spiritual and in temporal matters for the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Lord and Father in Christ Denis-Simon de Marquemont, by divine mercy and favor of the Holy Apostolic See Archbishop and Count of Lyons, Primate of France and] Councillor [in the Supreme Council of our Most Christian King],¹ to our beloved in Christ, Reverend Messire Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese and Bachelor of Theology, greetings in the Lord.

The knowledge of letters, [integrity] of life [and morals, and other praiseworthy merits of rectitude and virtue for which you have been commended to us in testimony worthy of faith, lead us to

Document 19. - Arch. Dép. du Rhône, Prov. reg., no. 8, p. 319v, and reg. 81 of *Régistre des Insinuations*, fol. 93, original in Latin. The document was published by Philippe Cordenod, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

¹La Faye's titles within the diocese of Lyons were *Camerarius* (administrator and guardian of the temporal rights of the diocese) and *Officialis* (Judicial Vicar with ordinary power to judge).

grant you favorably those things which we foresee will be conducive to your advantage. In recognition of] and because of these merits, therefore, we have conferred and hereby do confer, with full rights, the parish church of Saint-Martin in Buenens and its annex Saint-André Church in Châtillon in the aforementioned Lyons diocese, which is free and vacant at this time because Messire Mathieu Chevallier having been personally constituted his proxy by Messire Jean Lourdelot, its most recent holder, tendered his resignation unconditionally and without reserve into our hands and into the hands of the undersigned Secretary of the Archdiocese of Lyons, in the presence of the undersigned witnesses (which resignation we have accepted and, by means of these letters, do accept), upon your being worthy and fit, here present and accepting, and promising that, having been advised and informed of this obligation, you will establish your personal residence at that parish church and will not absent yourself from it without lawful cause approved in writing, under pain of deprivation of that same parish church. We have made provision for this church and all its rights and hereby do make such provision, and we establish you in it, invest you with it, and, by tenor and concession of these letters, put you in possession of it as if we had already brought you into it, without injury to the rights of anyone else, and conduct the ceremony of installation, fully bestowing on you the government and administration of this parish church in spiritual and temporal affairs, with all the rights attached to it.

We have received from you the oath which it is customary to swear in such matters. By virtue of the aforesaid authority, therefore, we order that, as required in such matters, the senior priest or the public notary place you or, if you so choose, your proxy acting in your place and name, in the corporal, real, and actual possession of the aforesaid parish church and all the rights attached to it, and install you, observing all the customary formalities. In testimony of the present action, we have brought the seal of the household of the Most Illustrious Lord Archbishop to be affixed to these letters.

Drawn up and given in Lyons on July 29, in the year of Our Lord 1617, in the presence of Maître Bonet Alix, practitioner in civil law, and Maître Michel Combret, theologian, who reside in Lyons and

were called and stood by as witnesses to the foregoing, signed by V. Depaul, Meschatin La Faye, and Chevallier the proxy.

For the aforesaid Reverend Vicar-General.

LINET²

**20. - ACT OF TAKING POSSESSION OF THE PARISH
OF CHÂTILLON**

(August 1, 1617)

Be it known to all, that, on the afternoon of August 1, 1617, before me, the undersigned royal notary,¹ and in presence of the undersigned witnesses, Reverend Messire Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese and Bachelor of Holy and Sacred Theology, presented himself at the main door of the parish church of Buenens, dedicated to Saint Martin and addressed the priest Messire Guillaume Sauvageon, Assistant of the church in Buenens and of its annex, Saint-André in Châtillon. He stated and pointed out to him that, in conformity with the resignation made of it to him by Messire Mathieu Chevallier the proxy, on behalf of Messire Jean Lourdelot, last holder of the pastorate of the church in Buenens and of Saint-André in Châtillon; and in consequence of the letters patent obtained by him from Messire Thomas de Meschatin La Faye, Chamberlain, Canon, and Count of Saint-Jean Church in Lyons and Vicar-General of the Archbishop of Lyons, that were dated this past July 29, signed by Meschatin La Faye, de Paul, Chevallier the proxy, and Livet,² and sealed with the great seal in red wax, letters which he actually produced and presented to Messire Sauvageon; he requested him, by virtue of the said letters patent, to put him in

²Coste has *Livet*, but this is probably a misreading of *Linet*. Jean Linet was Secretary of the Archbishop of Lyons.

Document 20. - Arch. Dép. du Rhône, *Régistre des Insinuations*, vol. LXXXI, fol. 93. The document was published by Philippe Cordenod, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

¹Antoine Blanchard, notary in Châtillon-les-Dombes and member of the Confraternity of Charity soon to be established there by Vincent de Paul.

²Jean Linet (cf. Doc. 19, n. 2).

full and real possession and enjoyment of the pastorate of the churches of Saint-Martin in Buenens and Saint-André in Châtillon.

Messire Sauvageon accepted this and offered to do so, without prejudice to the benefits and revenues dependent on the pastorate, which he asserts having received until today because he served in this parish with Messire Hugues Rey, his associate. He then took the right hand of Messire de Paul and, after opening the main door of the church in Buenens, sprinkling holy water, and ringing the large bell three times, prayed before the main altar, then kissed it and examined and touched the church vestments. Everything having been done as best as it could have and should have been done, the said de Paul called upon me, the undersigned royal notary, to record every Act in order to make his right known in time and place as one might expect, which I granted him.

Drawn up in the aforesaid church of Buenens, in the presence of Messires Jean Besson and Pierre Genoud, members of the Society of Priests³ of Saint-André in Châtillon; the honorable Jean, son of the late esteemed Jean Beynier; and the esteemed brothers and citizens Jean and Jacques Beynier; all witnesses from Châtillon.

DEPAUL	SAUVAGEON
BESSON	GENOUD
	BEYNIER
BLANCHARD	

On the said day, Messire de Paul left Buenens immediately and came to Châtillon, together with Messire Sauvageon, me the notary, and the witnesses. Then, having presented himself at the main door of Saint-André Church in Châtillon, produced and presented once again his previously indicated patents to Messire Sauvageon, calling upon him to put him in possession of the pastorate of Saint-André Church, in consequence of the resignation made to him by Messire Chevallier. Following this, Messire Sauvageon, on the declarations contained in the said Act, took the right hand of the said Messire, after which he entered the church and had Messire de

³ A sort of Chapter. The *prêtres sociétaires* had the responsibility of seeing that the foundation Masses set up by various families were said for their intentions or for the deceased members of their families.

Paul ring the large bell three times, kiss the main altar, examine and touch the vestments and other objects of the church, as indicated in the previous Act, after which he also asked me to record the entire proceedings, which was granted him.

Drawn up in the said church in the presence of the witnesses and signed by them, as indicated previously, and by me the royal notary, acting for Messire de Paul, at his request.

BLANCHARD

**21. - REPORT OF CHARLES DEMIA ON SAINT VINCENT'S STAY
IN CHÂTILLON-LES-DOBES**

(August 7, 1665)

After several meetings with the oldest and leading inhabitants of Châtillon, Messire Charles Demia, priest and Doctor in Canon Law at the University of Paris, who had formerly lived at the seminary of the Mission at the Bons-Enfants and at Saint-Sulpice in Paris, briefly summarized what took place during the stay of the priest Reverend Vincent de Paul as Pastor in Châtillon. What he heard was affirmed as true, and those who knew how to write consented to sign their names to it to give it a more authentic character when it will be needed.

In the year 1617, the parish of Châtillon-les-Dombes in the Bresse region was vacant because of the death of M. Soyront, ¹ benefice holder of Sainte-Croix in Lyons and Pastor of Châtillon. The Comtes de Saint-Jean, on whom this parish depends, and, in partic-

Document 21. - A copy of this document is found in one of the volumes of the process of beatification (Archives of the Congregation of Rites). Pierre Collet in *La vie de saint Vincent de Paul*, (2 vols., Nancy: A. Leseure, 1748), I, p. 60, note, dates the Demia Report August 7, 1665, stating that it was signed before Pierre Besson and Jean Collet, royal notaries in Châtillon.

Demia's allegations of the deplorable state of the parish, written almost fifty years after Vincent de Paul's arrival there and exaggerating the actual conditions, were taken up by Abelly and succeeding biographers. The original documents paint a very different picture. (Cf. Bernard Koch, C.M., "Châtillon-les-Dombes et Saint Vincent," in *Bulletin des Lazaristes de France* [henceforth cited as BLF], 163, April 1998, pp. 73-93.)

¹Jean Sérand, priest and Doctor of Sacred Theology.

ular, the one to whom the nomination fell, prompted by zeal for the house of God, went to see Father Bence, Superior of the Oratory,² to get the name of some good priest to fill the post, explaining to him the extreme need of that large parish.

For almost forty years that parish had been in the possession only of benefice holders from Lyons, who came to Châtillon merely to collect the income from this one and so as not to give rise to a lapsed benefice. Moreover, Messieurs Beynier, Garron, Guichenon, Alix, and the leading inhabitants of this town were Huguenots. Only six elderly priests were there, members of the Society of Priests. They were living in a very licentious manner, and there were no monks or nuns in this town of almost two thousand inhabitants. Most of these priests kept girls or women with them, to the scandal of everyone, and there were a number of other abuses as well. When the Comte explained all this to that good Oratorian priest, the latter could think of no one suitable to remedy so many evils, nor anyone who might even be willing to take the matter in hand because that parish was a great burden and had only five hundred livres income at the time. So, he wrote to M. de Bérulle³ in Paris, asking him to let him know of some upstanding man who, not seeking his own interests, might seek only those of Jesus Christ. M. de Bérulle laid all this before M. Vincent de Paul and persuaded him to accept that post. He set out immediately and went to Lyons, where Father Métezeau,⁴ who knew Monsieur Beynier, one of the leading citizens of Châtillon, gave him a letter he addressed to the latter on behalf of M. Vincent, asking him, out of consideration for him, to be of service to him in whatever way he could.

M. Vincent arrived in Châtillon around Lent of the year 1617⁵ and gave him the letter. M. Beynier took him into his own home and wanted him to stay there, not only because of his good friend Father

²Jean de Bence.

³Pierre de Bérulle (cf. VIII, 224, n. 3).

⁴Father Métezeau, an Oratorian, had accompanied Denis de Marquemont, Cardinal-Archbishop of Lyons, on his visitation of this parish in 1614. Cf. Pierre Coste, *The Life and Works of St. Vincent de Paul* [henceforth cited as *Life*], trans. by Joseph Leonard, C.M. (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1952), vol. I, pp. 73-74.

⁵Abelly (*op. cit.*, bk. I, chap. IX, p. 37) states that Saint Vincent arrived in July 1617, not during Lent as Demia has here. Coste accepts Abelly's date (cf. *Life*, p. 74, n. 4).

Métezeau, but also because the rectory was uninhabitable and in total ruin.⁶

M. Beynier belonged to the so-called reformed religion⁷ and was living in all the licentiousness which his youth and the many possessions with which he was amply provided inspired him, and which those leading a debauched life were stirring up by their companionship. When he was subsequently converted, however, he was an example of virtue, as will be seen further on.

No sooner had M. Vincent arrived in Châtillon, than some devout persons informed him of the state of that parish and, when he learned the truth about the disorders M. de Bérulle had described to him and discovered many others as well, he saw clearly that he needed some powerful assistance. This obliged him to get a good priest to help him: Messire Louis Girard, priest and Doctor of Theology, from the Jayat⁸ parish in Bresse, who was respected, particularly in the province, for his virtue as well as for his learning, and who would later succeed M. Vincent.

In order, however, to proceed in a more orderly fashion to the declarations previously made to us by the inhabitants of Châtillon at different times, and the questions we asked them, it was deemed advisable to draw up a few specific articles dealing with the way he acted with regard to his household, God, himself and the priests, his parishioners, and lastly, toward his church.

⁶The report of the episcopal visitation in 1614 states that the rectory "was in fairly good condition" (cf. Coste, *Life*, vol. I, p. 74, n. 5). It was not available to Saint Vincent because Jean Sérand had leased it for six years to Louis Gomard for 103 livres by a contract of June 30, 1615. On August 19, 1617, Saint Vincent had the contract modified in order to reclaim the rectory by the following November 11. (Archives of the Daughters of Charity, Châtillon.)

⁷Jean Beynier was not a Huguenot, as reported to Charles Démia in 1664-65, for he often signed the baptismal register as a witness, even long before Saint Vincent's arrival.

⁸A locality in the district of Bourg (Ain).

FIRST ARTICLE

The way M. Vincent conducted himself with regard to his household, the conversions he made in it, and what happened to it.

Before beginning to root out all the abuses we mentioned, M. Vincent made a general visitation of the entire parish in order to become acquainted with the state it was in, trying to win over everyone either by extraordinary friendliness or almsgiving.

Knowing that the one who neglects his own servants is worse than an unbeliever, he set up regulations for the house of the person with whom he was living, as if in a religious Order. They rose at five o'clock and prayed for half an hour; then they each cleaned their separate rooms, which were on the third floor. Next, they prayed the Office and celebrated Holy Mass, and afterward he continued his visits in the parish. Still, not until the end was this schedule followed regularly.

Since, however, those who are closer to the sun or to fire feel the heat more and are more affected by it, in the same way the household and relatives of M. Beynier received so many blessings from the stay of this virtuous guest that it is easy to see and to say, in view of the extraordinary changes which occurred during the time he remained there, that the hand of the Lord was with him.

The whole family of the officer M. Jacques Garron, brother-in-law of M. Beynier and formerly one of the men-at-arms of the Duc de Montpensier,⁹ belonged to the so-called reformed religion. Through the great care of M. Vincent it was totally converted. Jacques and Philibert Garron were the first to convert. Their father had taken Messieurs Vincent and Beynier to court at the Chamber of the Edict in Grenoble as being responsible for this, and he died of chagrin because of it. M. Vincent had worked hard at his conversion, through the intervention of Jacques Garron his son, but was unsuccessful. René and Jean Garron were absolved from heresy shortly afterward by M. Vincent. Once Jacques, René, and Philibert Garron were converted, they immediately donated almost

⁹Henri de Bourbon, son of King Henry IV.

all their possessions to good works and accomplished outstanding deeds as a result of the instructions of M. Vincent, since the eldest became a Capuchin, and the daughter an Ursuline nun.

M. Beynier was also completely converted by the stay of M. Vincent. He left the so-called reformed religion and renounced being Abbot of Malgouvernés (?), where he had led a very dissolute life. He made restitution to private individuals, restored the church, and made a large number of very substantial bequests, on the advice of M. Vincent. He lived a celibate life until the age of forty-five, devoting himself to many works of charity, especially during the famine and plague that occurred in Châtillon; in a word, he impoverished himself by his alms, although previously he had been very well off.

SECOND ARTICLE

How M. Vincent acted with regard to God, himself, the priests, the Church, etc.

The witnesses state that they always saw M. Vincent with very short hair and wearing a very short rabat and a cassock reaching to his ankles. He was very modest and recollected in church and elsewhere, was extremely generous with poor persons, and did not dispute his rights. They also acknowledged his deep humility, as well as his extraordinary prudence and charity.

The priests of that time were in truth very far removed from the way priests act today: some kept women of questionable character, went often to the taverns, gambled, and did many other things to which M. Vincent brought about a notable change—in their actions and in their morals—and this took place in a most remarkable way. They sent those women away, thanks to M. Vincent, who put a stop to the communal confessions that were being made aloud, payment

that was being demanded for confession, a kind of relaxation called *the Kingdom*,¹⁰ which took place in the church tower, and several other abuses and scandals. He prompted them [the priests] to live in common¹¹ and prevented church property from being squandered.

As for the churches in Châtillon, there were only two at the time, and their buildings and vestments were in poor condition. They have since been restored, thanks to the advice M. Vincent gave to certain persons. He saw to it that they used the canopy when the Blessed Sacrament was being carried to the sick, which they had not been doing. He put a stop to village fairs and dances on the feast of the Ascension and other days, as well as night baptisms, women entering the sanctuary, town meetings being held in church, and betrothals in the home, and did various other things for the good order and restoration of the church, which would be too long to describe here and difficult to report in detail.

As for the attention M. Vincent gave to the parish, he made the general visitation of it and also visited the male and female school-teachers, inspiring them to great devotion. On Sundays and holy days, along with the Assistant, M. Girard, he gave the sermon or did the preaching, and taught catechism after dinner. For major feasts, he called in the Jesuits to preach and hear confessions. When administering the sacraments, he often gave instructions concerning the ceremonies. He was very assiduous in hearing confessions, to which a large number of persons from the neighboring areas came, who had not heard any sermons, attended catechism classes, nor received the sacraments for many years. To facilitate all this, he learned to speak the dialect of the Bresse region. He himself practiced well what he preached to others and impoverished himself by his excessive acts of charity.

¹⁰Is this another of Demia's exaggerations? "The Kingdom" was the name of the room in the church loft (there is no tower), where the clergy met, probably for some relaxation. People may have thought the worst, but there was most likely no harm in it.

¹¹While Saint Vincent's biographers affirm that he lived a community life with the priests, they erroneously attribute to him the initiative for this: the report of the pastoral visitation of 1614, while not stating specifically that they lived together, indicates that they shared a residence and celebrated the Office in common in church (cf. *BLF*, 163, April 1998, p. 86).

It was noted that, through his words and example, the members of the Beynier family and the parishioners who had the greatest contact with M. Vincent—such as Messieurs Beynier, Garron, and Blanchard, and Mesdemoiselles Baschet de la Chassaigne, de Brie, and others—performed outstanding acts of charity.

The extraordinary change in M. Beynier, in the seigneur de Rougemont, and in the de la Chassaigne ladies mentioned above was also the result of his instructions. They gave up their worldly ways of acting ¹² and, having placed themselves under M. Vincent's guidance, performed very Christian, exemplary acts. The Comte de Rougemont died wearing the Capuchin habit, after a long illness. He used his great wealth to found monasteries and for other good works, and the ladies also contributed to the foundation of the Capuchins in Châtillon. Lastly, since M. Vincent's arrival in Châtillon, all the Huguenot families who were there have now been converted, and the inhabitants and the church are quite changed.

On December 8 of the aforementioned year, he established a society of Ladies of Charity ¹³ for the assistance of some poor sick persons whom he had recommended in one of his sermons. It was approved by Archbishop de Marquemont. The poor were greatly assisted by it, especially during the plague and famine that raged in Châtillon. They still receive help from it every day. It would be difficult to report the spiritual profit this group has brought about through the conversions and changes among the sick whom those Ladies have aided. Similar groups, patterning themselves on the one in Châtillon, have been set up in Bourg and other neighboring areas.

So, that is how M. Vincent worked to uproot, eradicate, and destroy the abuses remaining in the vineyard where Providence had placed him; but just as he was preparing to do some planting there, a gentleman, believed to have been sent by M. de Bérulle and the General of the Galleys, ¹⁴ delivered several letters to him; among

¹²Françoise Baschet and Charlotte de Brie were not companions in their amusements: Françoise was Charlotte's mother, already a widow who had remarried (cf. *BLF*, 164, July 1998, p. 153).

¹³See Doc. 126 for the Rule of the Confraternity of Charity of Châtillon-les-Dombes.

¹⁴Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi.

others, one from M. de Bérulle, which really stirred up mixed emotions in his soul. After discussing the matter with him, however, and spending some time before the Blessed Sacrament, he left a short time later for Lyons in order to make some decision regarding this important affair, which he recommended to many devout persons, and to obtain the approval of the Archbishop for the Confraternity of Charity—which, as we have said, he did obtain.

When he returned from Lyons, he proceeded to put into operation and establish this confraternity on December 8, feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, in the chapel of the hospital. This was followed by the nomination of officers, as is seen in the Acts of December 8 and 12, a copy of which we have already sent to the Superior of the Bons-Enfants Seminary in Paris.

Shortly afterward, he distributed his clothing, even his linen, to poor persons in that parish and left for Paris, after stating in an exhortation that, when Providence led him to Châtillon, he thought he would not be leaving them, but, since things turned out otherwise, they—and he as well—had to conform themselves to God's holy Will. He said he was begging for their prayers, which he greatly needed, repeating this several times with great tenderness. It would be impossible to describe the tears that were shed and the cries that were heard when they saw that M. Vincent was leaving them.

On the last day of January of the following year, M. Vincent made an unconditional resignation in the document signed by Messire Thomas Gallot, a Paris notary. Following this the Comtes de Saint-Jean named Messire Louis Girard, who had been the Assistant in Châtillon, but not until July 10 of the same year.

Lastly, the undersigned state that it would be impossible to indicate everything that was done in such a short time by M. Vincent, and even difficult to believe it, had they not seen and heard it. They esteem him so highly that they speak of him as if he were a saint. They proclaim publicly that they never had and never will have such a Pastor and that he left them much too soon for them. Knowing what he did in Châtillon, they believe there would be sufficient to canonize him and are sure that, if he acted everywhere as

he did in that place, he will be canonized some day. And in order to give a more authentic proof of all of the above, each of those who saw and heard him consented to sign this letter.

GARRON BLANCHARD BESSON

BUY ÉTIENNE TELY

MICHAUD, *Rector of the Hôtel-Dieu*

DEMA, *unworthy priest*

22. - TRANSFER OF THE PARISH OF CHÂTILLON TO LOUIS GIRARD

(July 18, 1618)

Be it known to all that, before noon of this July 18, 1618, before me the undersigned royal notary, and in presence of the witnesses listed below, Reverend Messire Louis Girard, Doctor of Sacred Theology, of the Lyons diocese, presented himself to Messire Combret¹ at the main door of the parish church of Buenens, founded under the patronage of Saint Martin. The former stated and demonstrated that, in accordance with the authorization of resignation signed by the priest Reverend Messire Vincent de Paul, Pastor of the church and of its annex Saint-André Church in Châtillon, founded under the patronage of Saint Andrew, to resign the parish into the hands of His Holiness or to another having the authority, received by Messire Thomas Gallot, episcopal notary in Paris on the last day of January of the present year, he has been provided with Saint-Martin parish in Buenens . . . as he establishes by his letters . . . which he has shown to the priest Messire Pierre Genoud, of the Society of Priests at Saint-André Church in Châtillon. . . .

Document 22. - Arch. Dép. du Rhône, *Insinuations ecclésiastiques*, reg. 81, fol. 240v. The resignation of Saint Vincent is mentioned in the document of the nomination of Louis Girard, which Philippe Cordenod likewise published (*op. cit.*, p. 43).

¹Michel Combret.

23. - COMMISSION AS CHAPLAIN GENERAL OF THE GALLEYS

(February 8, 1619)

Today, February 8, 1619, the King being in Paris, regarding what the Comte de Joigny, General of the Galleys of France, has indicated to His Majesty concerning the necessity of choosing some upright priest of known ability to be given the office of royal chaplain for the benefit and relief of those who are galley convicts now and for those who will be so in future, that he might be held in consideration and have charge of all the other chaplains of the galleys; His Majesty, out of compassion for those galley convicts and desiring that they make the best use spiritually of their physical sufferings, has granted and made a gift of the office of Royal Chaplain to M. Vincent de Paul, priest and Bachelor of Theology, on the testimony given by the Comte de Joigny of his good conduct, piety, and integrity of life, to hold and exercise the office, with six hundred livres paid annually and with the same honors and rights enjoyed by the other officers of the Navy of the Levant.

His Majesty desires that M. de Paul, in his capacity as Royal Chaplain, should henceforth be held in consideration and have charge of all the other chaplains of the galleys, and that in this capacity he be inscribed and entered on the records of his galleys, in accordance with the present decree, which he [His Majesty] has willed to sign with his own hand and have countersigned by me, Councillor in his Council of State and Secretary of his Commands.

LOUIS

PHÉLIPPEAUX¹

On the back is written the following:

Today, February 12, 1619, M. Vincent de Paul, priest and Bachelor of Theology, designated in the other section, has taken and sworn the required oath to carry out his duty of Royal Chaplain of the galleys of France, before the Comte de Joigny, Lieutenant Gen-

Document 23. - Arch. Nat., S 6707, Marseilles file, notebook. This text is the reproduction of a copy checked against the original on January 5, 1644, by the notaries Dorléans and Païsant.

¹Paul Phélippeaux, Sieur de Pontchartrain and Secretary of State.

eral for His Majesty of the Seas of the Levant and General of the Galleys. This has been received in an Act separate from these letters, which were drawn up for him by the said gentleman, with me his secretary, the undersigned, being present.

DU FRESNE

23a. - LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF MADAME DE GONDI

(February 25, 1619)

Jésus, Maria

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, I hereby draw up my last will and testament, which I desire and intend to be carried out as my last and formal wish.

First of all, I commend my soul to God, my Creator and Savior Jesus Christ, thanking Him for choosing to give me my being and calling me to participate in His grace and His glory. I most humbly ask His forgiveness for the bad use I have made of this life and of the gifts I have received from Him, and for all the offenses I have committed since the first moment I had the use of reason until the last breath of my life. I implore the help of the glorious Virgin Mary, Mother of my God and Savior Jesus Christ, of all the angels and blessed spirits, especially Saint Michael, my guardian angel, and all the saints of paradise, specifically the saints whose names I bear, as well as Saints Peter and Paul, Saint Joseph, Saint Joachim, Saint Ann, Saint Mary Magdalen, Saint Barbara, blessed Mother Teresa, and Saint Catherine of Genoa, that they may be pleased to pray for me at the hour of my death.

I declare that I want to die in the faith of and in communion with the holy, Catholic, apostolic, and Roman Church.

I desire that my body be buried without pomp or ceremony, but that thirteen poor persons be clothed and my body be placed. . . .¹

I prescribe that, as soon as possible after my death, all the religious named below celebrate one low Mass for my soul, on the same day, if possible, and, if not, on different days, and that, in those monasteries where there are privileged altars² for the souls in purgatory, those Masses be said there, if this can be done, with the intention of applying the indulgence to my soul. Where there are none of these altars, I ask the religious who have the privilege, when saying their Mass with some medal, of applying the plenary indulgence for the souls in purgatory, to be willing to apply it to mine. These Masses will be either those said for the deceased or the Mass of the day, according to what is stipulated for granting the indulgence. I desire also that in all these Sacrifices prayers be offered for the salvation of my husband, my children, and my sister, and that commemoration be made of the Blessed Mother of God, both for them and for my own soul.

The places where I am requesting that these Masses be offered are at the Capuchins of Paris, both at Saint-Honoré and Saint-Jacques—and even the ones in Meudon—the Récollets,³ the Feuillants,⁴ the Carthusians, the reformed Carmelites, the reformed Augustinians, the Jesuits at Saint-Louis as well as at the novitiate and the collège, the Oratorian Fathers,⁵ and the Mercedarians.⁶ I desire that each priest in the aforementioned monasteries and places offer one Mass for me in the manner stated above, and I entreat all of them, for the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Holy Mother, not to refuse me this charity.

¹The sentence was left unfinished.

²An altar to which apostolic authority attaches the privilege whereby a plenary indulgence may be applied to the soul of the deceased person for whom Mass is celebrated on that altar.

³Reformed Order of Franciscans.

⁴Reformed monks of the Cistercian Order. In 1630 Pope Urban III divided the Congregation into two: the Italian Congregation, whose members took the title of Reformed Bernardines, and the French Congregation, which became the Congregation of Notre-Dame des Feuillants. They were popularly referred to as Feuillants because of the name of their principal house.

⁵Congregation founded in France by Cardinal de Bérulle.

⁶The Order of Mercy, founded for the redemption of captives by Saint Peter Nolasco in the thirteenth century.

I prescribe these Masses only for the said monasteries and places situated in Paris or in the faubourgs; for those outside, only at Nigeon and the Bois de Vincennes. I desire furthermore that the same be done by the Capuchins of Joigny and the Carthusians of Val-Profonde, and that, in God's name, the Daughters of the Passion, the Carmelites of rue Chapon and the faubourg Saint-Jacques, and the Sisters of the *Ave Maria* of Paris all be asked to offer one Communion for my soul and to recommend it to God, along with the salvation of my husband, my children, my sister, and her family.

I wish also that, for a period of one year, a Mass be celebrated daily at Our Lady of Loreto, if possible, in the holy room of the Mother of God, that she might be pleased to intercede for my soul, for that of my late father and deceased relatives, and for the salvation of my husband, my children, my sister, and her family, asking the Blessed Virgin to be so kind as to keep them always under her special protection and to obtain paradise for them.

I prescribe also that, in all the places and villages belonging either to me or to my husband, one Mass be celebrated in each church for my soul, and the Office for the Dead be said on the eve, at which all my subjects are requested to be present and to say one Our Father and one Hail Mary for me. I request that the Pastors or other priests ask all of them, on my behalf, to go to confession and offer one Communion that God may be pleased to have mercy on my soul. I ask this charity of them for the love of God.

(The preceding is written by Mme. de Gondi herself; the next part of the text is written by the notary.)

Today, on the date of these present letters, the high and powerful Lady Françoise-Marguerite de Silly, wife and spouse of Messire Emmanuel de Gondi, Comte de Joigny and General of the Galleys of France, living on rue des Petits-Champs in Saint-Eustache parish in Paris, who is now lying in bed physically ill, yet sound of mind, memory, and understanding, as is apparent to the undersigned notaries, has given instructions to the said notaries, stating and declaring that she has written with her own hand what is on the three sheets of paper written above this page, which she has stated to be her last will and testament and which she desires to be implemented and

carried out according to her wishes and intention. She has had it read to her at present, word for word, by one of the undersigned notaries in the presence of the other one, adding to it and supplementing it. Whereas her physical indisposition has not allowed her to draw up entirely in writing the additions to her will and intention, she wanted the following to be drawn up in writing in this document by the said notaries:

Namely, that she asks her husband and all their servants to receive Holy Communion for her intention on the day of her death or on the day of her funeral and to pray for her; and, so that the subjects of the Lady may be better prepared to go to confession and Communion for her intention, the Jesuits or the Oratorians will be asked to come to her estates for this purpose, with indulgences, if this can be done.

Likewise, she gives, bequeaths, and leaves to her husband, by donation and testamentary disposition and in the best form possible, each and every one of her movable goods: acquests and acquisitions, real and separate, feudal and manorial, which belong and may belong to the said Lady and depending on whether the custom of the places where the lands and estates are situated allow this, both with regard to the ownership as well as to the usufruct of the said property, all this provided that, and in the event that, the testatrix die with no children, or her children die before her husband.

And in order to avoid the lawsuits that might arise between her husband and the heirs of the said Lady over the assessment of the separate, feudal, and manorial goods she is giving to her husband, the Lady prescribes that her heirs have the option and may repurchase her separate, feudal, and manorial goods, at the rate of one denier thirty.

The Lady likewise desires and prescribes that the plot of mature timber on her Picardy estates be sold to pay off the remainder of the debts of the late Messire and Mme. de Rochepot, her father and mother, which she still has to pay, along with the ones from Montmirail. The money is also to be used for the redemption of the annuity set up by her and her husband.

The Lady likewise gives, bequeaths, and leaves an income of one thousand livres *tournois* to be taken from the profits and revenues of her estates in Picardy, Montmirail, and Champagne, to be used in part for the sick poor of the Association of Charity which is, or will be, established on her aforementioned estates, and to have the Jesuits or Oratorians go to her estates once a year to give a mission with plenary indulgences and, during their stay in those places, to instruct and catechize the people. All this is to be done according to the order and distribution to be made by the executors of her present testament, who are named below. The estates in Picardy, Montmirail, and Champagne can be released from the one thousand livres *tournois* income in one or several payments, by designating other estates for the one thousand livres *tournois* income, or purchase one or several properties in the area from the income of the one thousand livres, used as has been stated.

Likewise, she gives, bequeaths, and leaves to the poor persons of the said Association of Charity in Montmirail a one-time payment of eight hundred livres *tournois*.

Likewise, she gives and bequeaths two hundred livres *tournois* to be used for vestments for Saint-Martin Church in Montmirail.

Likewise, she wills and prescribes that all her domestic servants be paid in full all the wages that will be due them up until the day of her death, and, in order to reward them and recognize their services, she gives them the following, namely, to Dufresne her secretary, the sum of fifteen hundred livres; to Toutblanc, also her secretary, the sum of two thousand four hundred livres; to Mlle. Caron, besides what she has given her previously, nine hundred livres *tournois*; to Mlle. de Saint-Aubin, the sum of two thousand five hundred livres *tournois* to be taken from the taxes on the Palletan estate, which she gave her previously, and on her other property as well; to Mlle. de Champetin, fifteen hundred livres *tournois*; to her chambermaid Marguerite, the sum of six hundred livres; to Françoise her children's maid, the sum of three hundred livres; to Simon, treasurer of her household, and to his wife, the sum of three hundred livres; to Jacqueline the kitchenmaid, thirty livres *tournois*; to the major-domo named du Mont, three hundred livres

tournois; to La Barre the valet, three hundred livres; to Descluseaux also, three hundred livres; to Charles the cook, one hundred fifty livres. And for what concerns the men named de Laulnay and Gui Posts, the said Lady asks her husband to give them what he promised them, which is one thousand livres to Laulnay and whatever her husband pleases to give to Gui Posts; to Antoine Portail, for the trouble he has taken with her children, three hundred livres; to the coachman, one hundred livres; to the elder and younger Breton, fifty livres apiece; to Bertrand, twenty-six livres so he can learn a trade; to Toussaing the groom, thirty livres; to each of the other grooms, twelve livres; and to the kitchenboy, also twelve livres *tournois*.

Likewise, she gives and bequeaths to Messire Vincent de Pol [*sic*] her confessor and the tutor of her children, the sum of fifteen hundred livres *tournois*, previously lent to him by her and her husband and for which he gave his word, from which she wishes besides to release him; in addition, she gives and bequeaths to him a one-time payment of nine hundred livres *tournois* to remind him to pray for this testatrix, entreating him to continue to remain with her husband and children and not to leave their service. She also entreats her husband to retain Messire Pol in his service, along with Mlle. Caron for as long as she wishes to remain in his house, supporting her as at present, in recognition of the good and longstanding services she has rendered in the house; she likewise asks her husband to retain in his service the secretaries Toutblanc and Dufresne, who have given solid proofs of their loyalty. As for the gentlemen servants of her husband, she gives them nothing because she expects that her husband will reward them for their services.

Likewise, she declares that she has certain documents and notes concerning some cases of conscience which she understands have been settled and atoned for on the advice of Messire de Pol her confessor, to whom she has just now given them for this purpose.

And, so that her family will not be burdened by the bequests she has made to her servants by this, her last will and testament, she asks her husband to sell her pearls and jewels which she has given him in order to discharge in part these bequests; the other part can be taken

from the sale of the Montmirail woods, which could take place this year.

Likewise, she gives to her sister Mme. de Fargis her small diamond jewelry piece, which she wants to be given and handed over to her immediately after the death of the testatrix. In addition, she gives and bequeaths to her sister Mme. de Fargis the sum of two thousand livres *tournois*, to be deducted from what she may owe her on her word. In the event that there was no commitment for the one thousand livres, the remainder that is owed will be taken and deducted from another amount she has paid off for her sister.

Likewise, she gives to Mme. Fourche the sum of one hundred livres; to the daughter of the Provost of Villepreux, fifty livres; and she prescribes that each month some wheat be given and delivered to her husband's wet nurse, named la Courtresse, for food during her lifetime. Along with the wheat, she shall be given thirty sous *tournois* for as long as she lives.

Likewise, she gives to the poor persons in the Hôtel-Dieu of Paris a one-time payment of fifty livres *tournois*.

And because, in her testament, which she had begun to write in her own hand, she had left blank the place of her burial, she now wills and ordains that her body be buried and interred in the church of the Carmelite nuns in the faubourg Saint-Jacques, near the door of the church, and that the convent of the church be given a one-time payment of the sum of three hundred livres *tournois*.

Likewise, she gives to the Carmelite nuns of rue Chapon in Paris a similar one-time payment of the sum of three hundred livres *tournois*.

Likewise, she gives and bequeaths to the house and hospital of the Charity in the faubourg Saint-Germain a one-time payment of the sum of fifty livres. In addition, if it should be discovered later that the said Lady is bound anywhere to the restitution of something she may not recall at present, she asks her husband and each of her heirs to pay it as soon as it is brought to their attention.

Likewise, to carry out the terms of the testament begun in her own hand, and of this document, the said Lady has named and appointed as executors her husband the General of the Galleys, and

M. Berger, Counselor in the Parlement court, to each of whom, in the presence of the other, she has given and does give power and authority for this last will and testament and the one written in her own hand, to carry out and implement, point for point, in accord with their form and terms, revoking all other testaments and codicils she may have drawn up before the present last will and testament, wishing that this take effect and become operative. She relinquishes into the hands of these executors, for the year that it is customary, all her property, until the full execution of the testaments.

Drawn up, dictated, and appointed, word for word, by the testatrix to the said notaries, and read and reread to her by one of them with the other present, together with the one written in her own hand, all of which she asserts to have understood very clearly, in the residence of the said General, located on rue des Petits-Champs in Saint-Eustache parish, on the afternoon of February 25, 1619.

FRANÇOISE-MARGUERITE DE SILLY

MOREL TURGIS⁷

**24. - POWER OF ATTORNEY TO TAKE POSSESSION
OF SAINT-NICOLAS DE GROSSE-SAUVE PRIORY**

(February 7, 1624)

In the presence of the undersigned not[aries] and attorneys¹ of our Sire the King, at the Ch[âtel]et of Paris, p[rese]nt in person was the priest Maître Vincent de Paulle [*sic*], Pastor of Clichy-la-Garenne, appointed by His Holiness to Saint-Nicolas de Grosse-Sauve Priory,

⁷Denis Turgis, a notary in Paris. No information is available for Morel.

Document 24. - Arch. Nat., *Minutier Central*, XC, vol. 189, reprinted in *Annales C. M.* (1940), pp. 269-70. Coste used a different source: "Saint Vincent de Paul, membre du clergé langrois" in *Semaine religieuse* of Langres, May 1, 1897. A fragment of the parchment on which this Act was written was used to attach to its binding the endpaper of a *Missale Lingonense*, which Joseph Royer of Langres had acquired in 1897. This edition uses the more complete document given in *Annales*, which also provides the date and signatories of the power of attorney.

¹Messieurs Ogier and Motelet.

of the Order of Saint Augustine, Langres diocese,² who has made and constituted . . .³ as his proxy and to whom he has given power and authority, in his name and on his behalf, to receive the transfer of Saint-Nicolas de Grosse-Sauve Priory; to take real and actual possession of this priory; to make for this purpose the customary submissions required in such cases; to request, if need be, a written record of this; to insert and register it wherever it shall be deemed advisable; and, in general, to do for the taking possession all that the constituent would do if he were p[rese]nt in person. Promising, binding. . . .

Drawn up and signed in the offices of the undersigned notaries on February 7,⁴ 1624:

OGIER V. DEPAUL MOTELET

25. - OUTLINE OF A SERMON TO ANNOUNCE THE VISITATION OF A BISHOP

To announce the visitation of the Bishop and to exhort the people to prepare themselves well in order to profit by it.

John 12: *Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!*¹

Luke 1: *Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel because He has visited and ransomed his people.*²

²It was unusual for the Holy See to make an appointment to a priory in seventeenth-century France; in this instance, it is doubly confusing. As Coste notes, Sébastien Zamet, Bishop of Langres (cf. I, 277, n. 9), had united Grosse-Sauve to the Congregation of the Oratory on June 23, 1623, despite the protestations of the Chapter of Saint-Mamès, which had claimed the right of having the benefice at its command. They submitted the issue to the tribunals; the proceedings went on for three years. After an arrangement with the Chapter, the Oratorians assumed possession of the priory definitively on March 24, 1626. In the interval, Saint Vincent had undoubtedly renounced his claims.

³The space for the name was left blank for Saint Vincent to fill in later. The parchment published in 1897 reads: *Messire Pierre . . . Manferet de Langres*.

⁴The day of the month is omitted in the Coste version.

Document 25. - Original autograph document, which belonged to the Pastor of Saint-Vincent-de-Paul in Clichy. It was erroneously stated that the Saint had delivered the sermon in this parish when he was Pastor there; apparently, however, the preacher was not the Pastor, and the Bishop of the persons to whom he was speaking was not his Bishop.

¹The acclamation of the people at the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. Cf. Jn 12:13. (NAB)

²The prophecy of Zechariah at the naming of Saint John the Baptist. Cf. Lk 1:68. (NAB)

We will deal with three points:

- (1) The importance of preparing yourselves for the visitation of the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Bishop your Prelate.
- (2) What will be done during this visitation.
- (3) The means of benefiting from it.

Its importance is clear:

[1] Because the Church, inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit, ordains that Bishops will make the visitation of their people from time to time and, consequently, obliges the people to welcome them.

[2] Because of the great advantages accruing from this to the Church and to the people: to the Church, because it is an opportunity for him [the Bishop] to see whether everything is in good condition and to do everything possible to put the people into a proper state; to the people, because he brings them great graces and blessings, as you will see later.

[3] Because *He placed Bishops to guide the Church of God.* ³ If men who come to rule over the bodies and property of the province are given such great honors, how much more should they be given to those who are to guide souls in the provinces!

[4] Because he must render an account of all your souls, with the result that he must suffer for yours if they are lost through his fault. *Obey your leaders who keep watch over you as men who have to render an account of your souls.* ⁴

[5] Because whoever receives his Prelate receives God Himself. *He who welcomes you welcomes me.* ⁵

Second point: *What is done during the visitation.*

(1) The people go in procession to welcome him. The Pastor gives him the cross to kiss, offers him the sprinkler so that he may take holy water, then gives him some incense. After this, the *Te*

³Cf. Acts 20:28. (D-RB)

⁴Cf. Heb 13:17. (NAB)

⁵Cf. Mt 10:40. (NAB)

*Deum*⁶ is intoned and chanted as far as the church; at the entrance the response of the patron saint is sung. The Prelate is led to the altar, where the Pastor says a suitable prayer. Then, the Prelate gives the blessing, makes a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, and examines the baptismal font, the holy oils, the altars, the vestments, and the cemetery, where he prays for the dead. Next, he sees that an exhortation is given and the acts of contrition said in order to receive general absolution from any venial sins. He then makes enquiries concerning the life of the priests and of the people and gives orders regarding the complaints made to him either by the people or by the priests, distributes Holy Communion to the people and confirms them after dinner, attends or recites Compline, if he has time, etc.

From this you see the benefits that arise from it, which are:

[1] That he puts God's house in the state in which it should be.

[2] That he reconciles the people with God by a good confession and Holy Communion.

[3] That he reconciles the people among themselves.

[4] That he gives orders regarding prayers, services, and all that concerns divine worship.

[5] That he grants you the indulgences for the living and the dead *per modum suffragii*.⁷

[6] That he confirms you and makes you true soldiers of Jesus Christ.

[7] In a word, that he removes from a parish anything that is bad and establishes good there.

The means to help each person to benefit from this visitation.

[1] Ask it of God. Let us all say to Him from the heart, "Lord, grant us the grace to prepare ourselves well in order to benefit from the visit of our Prelate."

[2] Stir up the will; resolve to do all you will be advised to do and say to God, "Yes, my God, I resolve to do all I will be advised to do by this preacher, the precursor of my Prelate, as Saint John was the

⁶A hymn of praise of fifth-century origin.

⁷By means of suffrages.

precursor of Our Lord, and to do whatever he tells us to do for that purpose.”

[3] Make a general confession of your whole life, or at least of the principal sins, in order to receive a general remission of all your sins. I mean of all, and here are the motives:

(1) Because in these general confessions we have the power to absolve you from all your sins, even though they may be reserved to the Bishops.

(2) Because it is to be feared that your previous confessions were not good if you did not abide by the four required conditions:

[1] Failure to examine your conscience.

[2] No regret for having offended God.

[3] Not having told everything.

[4] Not having taken the resolution never to offend God again.

Now, the remedy for that is to make a general confession of your whole past life.

Objection: “O Monsieur! But how can I remember all my sins?”

Response: “All you need is good will; the confessors will help you.”

It will be well afterwards, by way of conclusion, for me to recall some story.

**25a. - POWER OF ATTORNEY AUTHORIZING ANTOINE PORTAIL¹
AND BLAISE LE FÉRON² TO TAKE POSSESSION
OF THE COLLÈGE DES BONS-ENFANTS³**

(March 2, 1624)

In nomine Domini. Amen. Be it known to all by virtue of this public document, that, on the afternoon of Saturday, March 2, in the year

Document 25a. - Arch. Nat., M 105, copy, original in Latin, reprinted in *Annales C. M.* (1940), pp. 458-59. This edition uses the latter text.

¹Antoine Portail (cf. **VIII**, 105, n. 3).

²Blaise Le Féron, born in Chartres (Eure-et-Loir), was named Abbot of Saint-Lomer in Blois; accused of Jansenism, he was not accepted for the office. He became Vicar-General of Chartres in 1652, died in 1659, and was buried in Sainte-Foy. (Cf. Abbé Joseph Beauhaire, *Diocèse de Chartres. Chronologie* . . . , 1892, p. 9.)

³Collège des Bons-Enfants (cf. **VIII**, 61, n. 2).

of the same Lord 1624, before me the undersigned, Thomas Gallot, cleric of Paris, Licentiate in Canon and Civil Laws, sworn notary by apostolic authority and the authority of the venerable archdiocesan curia of Paris in the registers of the archdiocese and of the Prefecture of Paris, residing in Paris in the new quarter of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the excellent man Reverend M. Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese, Licentiate in Canon Law,⁴ chaplain and principal of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, located and founded at the University of Paris near the Porte Saint-Victor, residing in Paris and agent of the hospice in the district and parish of Saint-Sauveur, came to me and presented himself in person to implement the royal edicts. In the presence of two witnesses, he voluntarily and freely named, made, and constituted his general and special proxies, though in such a way that specialty does not derogate from generality nor the contrary, Messires Antoine Portail, a priest, and Blaise Féron, also a priest and Bachelor of Theology, to be written in the text of the present letter as bearers of the present letter, acting absent as present, either one independently, specially and expressly, in the name and on behalf of the same Maître Vincent de Paul, chaplain and principal, who appointed them for the purpose of taking, entering, gaining, and achieving the corporal, real, and actual possession of his aforesaid chapel and office of principal of the said collège, with each and every right, appurtenance, and dependency that may be connected to them, or to request and obtain that he be placed and introduced into the same possession, observing, moreover, the ceremonies to be observed, and which are customarily observed on such occasions, as well as the rest of the observances. Likewise, the taking of such possession and the kind of vacancy must be published and made known by royal edict, or care must be taken that it is published and made known. Likewise, divine worship and other rites must be observed in a praiseworthy manner in the chapel, and care taken that all that is required is observed. They must take care also to ask and to obtain all the particular and general Acts of execution for this possession, stating, carrying

⁴At the process for beatification, Brother Pierre Chollier presented the documents issued by the University of Paris awarding Saint Vincent a Licentiate in Law. The Saint is recognized by this title for the first time in this document.

out, procuring, and providing what the gentleman would state, carry out, procure, and provide if he were personally present, and everything else that might be required by the particular mandate that is entrusted to him. Promising . . . of which. . . .

All this was drawn up in Paris in the house of my aforesaid notary, in the place mentioned above, in the presence of Maîtres Mathurin Guyonneau and Gilles Flamen, clerics respectively of the dioceses of Le Mans and Amiens, residing in Paris in the new quarter of the Blessed Virgin Mary, called and requested as witnesses to the draft of the present letters, which they have duly signed along with the said Lord constituent and me, the aforesaid notary, in the aforementioned place, year, month, and day. *Signed as follows:*

T. GALLOT

**25b. - ACT OF TAKING POSSESSION OF THE BONS-ENFANTS
BY ANTOINE PORTAIL
IN THE NAME OF VINCENT DE PAUL**

(March 6, 1624)

Before noon on Wednesday, March 6, in the year of Our Lord 1624, before me the undersigned, Thomas Gallot, cleric of Paris, Licentiate in Canon and Civil Laws, sworn public notary by apostolic authority and the authority of the venerable archdiocesan curia of Paris in the registers of the archdiocese and the prefecture of Paris, residing in Paris in the new quarter of the Blessed Virgin Mary, designated and registered to carry out the royal edict, in virtue and with the authority of certain letters of conferral or provision of the office of principal and chaplain of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, founded in the University of Paris near the Porte Saint-Victor and now made vacant by the resignation of Maître Louis de Guyard, priest and Doctor of Theology and the last immediate principal and chaplain and peaceful possessor of the same office of principal and chaplain, made into the hands of the Most Illustrious and Most Rev-

erend Jean-François de Gondi, by the grace of God and the holy Apostolic See Archbishop of Paris, Councillor of our Most Christian King in his State and Religious Councils, Grand Master of the Royal Chapel, unconditionally made by Maître de Guyard and admitted by the same Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Archbishop of Paris, given and granted to Maître Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese, Licentiate in Canon Law, *dated Paris March 1, in the year of Our Lord 1624*, and signed as follows: *By mandate of the Most Illustrious and Reverend Lord Archbishop of Paris, J. Baudouyn*, and duly sealed with red wax, I have declared Maître Antoine Portail, priest of the Arles diocese, the legitimate proxy with letters of delegation from the said Maître Vincent de Paul, and placed him in the real and actual possession of the aforesaid office of principal and chaplain of all lawful annexes and appurtenances, with free entrance and exit to and from the church or chapel of the collège through the door of the chapel of the collège; to pray while kneeling before the venerable image of the Crucifix, that of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the altar of the chapel; kissing and touching the same altar; sitting in the chair of the principal and chaplain of the same collège; ringing the bell in the same chapel as is due and customary; free entry and exit into and out of the house and rooms of the principal and chaplain; and other prescribed ceremonies.

I have duly published this possession and resignation and have given and granted to M. Portail a document concerning the above matters, to which no one objected or contradicted, and which he requested specifically from me.

These Acts have been drawn up at the Collège des Bons-Enfants, in the presence of Nicolas Pluyette, cleric of the Paris diocese; Pierre Pluyette, scholarship holder at the collège; Gérard Rouyer, porter of the collège, and Blaise Rouyer, brother of Gérard, both of whom live at the same collège; Maître Blaise Fortin, priest of the Coutances diocese; François Creté, citizen of the Paris region, living at the collège, all witnesses called and requested for the aforementioned.

Signed as follows:

T. GALLOT

**25c. - VISITATION REPORT OF THE CHURCH IN CLICHY
BY THE ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS**

October 9, 1624

The aforementioned Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Archbishop of Paris made a canonical visitation of the parish church of Clichy-la-Garenne in the Paris diocese.

Pastor: Maître Vincent Pol [*sic*], priest, attested Licentiate in [Canon and Civil] Laws.

Assistant: M. Grégoire Le Coust, approved priest of the Coutances diocese.

Chaplain: Pierre Pasquier, approved.

Sacred objects, altars, sacristy, vestments, and sacred vessels: clean, suitable, and kept in order.

About three hundred communicants.

No heretics.

Church wardens. . . .

Marie Boulon, midwife.

A duly attested midwife to be appointed.

The Divine Office is celebrated correctly.

No complaints against the Pastor and the priests, nor from the Pastor concerning his people.

The catechism is being taught.

The registers are kept up to date.

About one hundred confirmed.

26. - RECEIPT FOR A SUM OF MONEY

(October 20, 1625)

In the presence of the undersigned notaries of our Sire the King at his Châtelet of Paris, the priest Messire Vincent de Paul, Licentiate in

Document 25c. - Arch. Nat., Z^o 241, original in Latin, reprinted in *Annales C.M.* (1929), pp. 729-30.

Document 26. - Berceau-de-Saint-Vincent-de-Paul (Landes), original.

Canon Law, living in Paris on rue Pavée, Saint-Sauveur parish,¹ acknowledges having received in cash from the noble gentleman . . .² the King's Counselor, *Receveur Général*,³ and payer of the annuity allocated on the *gabelles* and the salt *grenier*⁴ of France, the sum of six hundred fifty livres thirteen sous four deniers *tournois*; that is, one hundred fifty livres thirteen sous four deniers for the income due from last June 3 to the last day of the month of June, and five hundred livres *tournois* for the three months of July, August, and September, also now overdue, all of which because of the income of two thousand livres *tournois* sold to him or constituted by the Provosts of Tradesmen, magistrates of this city of Paris, on the third day of last June, to be taken on the said salt *greniers* by a contract signed before [Guillaume] Herbin and Charles, notaries at the said Châtelet, of which from the sum of six hundred fifty livres three sous four deniers the said Messire de Paul. . . .

Drawn up and signed October 20, 1625, in the offices of the said notaries.

VINCENT DEPAUL

CHARLES

HERBIN

27. - DEED OF GIFT OF SAINT VINCENT TO HIS RELATIVES

(September 4, 1626)¹

Present was Messire Vincent de Paul, Counselor and Royal Chaplain, Principal of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, founded at the

¹In an agreement dated December 22, 1625 (Office of Maître Paul Tollu, 70 rue Saint-Lazare, Paris, reg. fol. 550), mention is made of "Messire Vincent de Paul, Royal Chaplain and Principal of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, founded at the University of Paris, residing on the street near the Porte Saint-Victor." It was, therefore, some time between October 20 and December 22, 1625, that the Saint left the home of the General of the Galleys.

²The place for the name was left blank.

³Chief officer responsible for the collection of provincial taxes.

⁴The *gabelle* was a tax on salt; *grenier* indicates the rent for the storage of the salt.

Document 27. - Office of Maître Paul Tollu, 70 rue Saint-Lazare, Paris.

¹This is the same date as that of the Contract of Association signed by Saint Vincent and his first companions (cf. Doc. 61). Might it not also be the day on which the Saint resigned as Pastor in Clichy?

University of Paris, living there in Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet parish, originally from the parish of Poy, Dax diocese, in Gascony. Willingly and of his own free will, with no constraint, as he stated, he has recognized and acknowledged having donated, handed over, given up, transferred, and relinquished, and by this document donates, hands over, gives up, transfers, and relinquishes by an irrevocable deed of gift made *inter vivos*, with no expectation or intention of being able to revoke it or take it back in any way or form whatsoever, beginning now and for always, and for greater security has promised and does promise to guarantee from all disorders and impediments in general Bernard and Gayon de Paul, brothers of the said Vincent de Paul, who are absent but are living in the parish of Poy in the said region. The undersigned specified notaries stipulate and accept, on behalf of them, their heirs, and beneficiaries in the future, each and every one of his possessions, both movable and immovable paternal goods located in the parish of Poy, belonging to Messire Vincent de Paul, the donor, and all he can give them, in accord with the custom of the region of Gascony. In particular he gives to each of them the sums which M. de Saint-Martin, ² Municipal Counselor of Dax, will have used on his behalf and in his name for the payment of debts amounting to nine hundred livres *tournois*, advanced by M. Vincent de Paul in this city, on his order, to M. de Saint-Martin, ³ son of the previously-mentioned M. de Saint-Martin, and which he gave instructions to be used to pay off the debts of Bernard and Gayon de Paul and to purchase a small holding located in Saint-Paul parish, consisting of a house and about thirty or forty measures of land from the heirs of the late Messire Pierre de la Maignère, when he was living as master mason in the town of Dax, and which small holding the said Maignère had previously bought from Grégoire, husband of Marie de Paul, ⁴ sister of Vincent de Paul. To this Marie de Paul his sister, Messire Vincent de Paul gives the same as stated above, and instructs the *sieurs* of the said small

²Jean de Saint-Martin.

³Monsieur de Saint-Martin d'Agès.

⁴Saint Vincent had two sisters named Marie; they are distinguished in this document only by the names of their husbands.

holding to pay each year for fifteen years two conchs of rye to Gayon de Paul his second brother, given that the donee has declared that he did not get as much as his older brother. He also gives, as is stated, to his nephew and niece de Paillole, children of the late Jean de Paillole and another Marie de Paul his sister, two other conchs of rye for a period of fifteen years only. In the event that Grégoire's wife, Marie de Paul, should die without grandchildren, or should her grandchildren die without heirs, the donor wills and intends that the small holding return and revert to the children and heirs of his brothers, their heirs and beneficiaries, for the above-mentioned things, given to be enjoyed by the above-named persons, their heirs and beneficiaries, and to do with and dispose of them as they please and will, as of something belonging to them by means of this document. This donation is made in virtue of his close friendship with the above-mentioned persons and because it has been and is his will and pleasure to do this for them, transferring, relinquishing, willing as proxy the bearer, giving power, etc.

And to have this document introduced at the Châtelet of Paris and wherever else it shall be deemed advisable, the said Messire Vincent de Paul has made and constituted his irrevocable and perpetual proxy the bearer of this document, to whom he gives authority to write and request letters for this, promising, obliging, renouncing, etc.

Drawn up and signed in the offices before noon of September 4, 1626.

VINCENT DEPAUL

CHARLES

SAULNIER⁵

⁵M. Charles and M. Nicolas Saulnier were notaries in Paris.

28. - TESTIMONY CONCERNING A MIRACULOUS RECOVERY

[Around 1628]

At times, God in His goodness is pleased to perform miracles through His saints in order to manifest their sanctity. I shall set forth here one of them, of which I am a witness, that happened to Sister [Claire-Marie Amaury],¹ a Visitation nun in the monastery of the faubourg Saint-Jacques in Paris.

The fact is that about six years ago this nun was tormented by a horrible temptation of loathing for God, the Blessed Sacrament, and all the practices of holy religion, with the result that she blasphemed against God and cursed Him as often as she was told she should praise Him or heard Him praised by the other nuns. When she was in choir, she could be heard uttering quite loudly and distinctly peculiar blasphemies and curses against God. And when her Superior tried to have her make some act to offer herself to God, she replied to her that she had no other God but the devil. In brief, she experienced within herself so much fury and rage against His Divine Majesty that several times she was on the point of suicide, in order, she stated, to be sooner in hell, where she wanted to be, so as to have the means of cursing God eternally as she wished, and that all her delights were in that.

Now, the Reverend Mother Superior had her see Prelates, Order priests, and other persons versed in interior matters, and on their advice had even had her seen by physicians, on whose instructions she had her take a great number of remedies. All that was useless; in the end, that good Mother, fully confident that, if she touched her with a bit of the rochet of the blessed Bishop of Geneva, she would be cured, did just that. The conversion followed instantaneously a few

Document 28. - Abelly, *op. cit.*, bk. II, chap. VII, p. 331. Saint Vincent wrote this account concerning the holiness of Francis de Sales (cf. VIII, 39, n. 10). It was probably done before April 17, 1628, the day on which he gave his formal deposition at the beatification process for the saintly Bishop of Geneva.

¹Cf. I, 556, n. 8. For seven months of her first year in the Visitation Monastery (1622), Sister Claire-Marie Amaury remained in the grips of the horrible temptation about which Saint Vincent writes here; she was cured on January 30, 1623 (cf. *Année sainte des religieuses de la Visitation Sainte-Marie* [12 vols., Annecy: Ch. Burdet, 1867-71], vol. X, p. 225).

days later, with the result that her mind, which had been so troubled by this, became very peaceful all of a sudden; her body, which had become weak, regained its strength; her appetite and the sleep she had lost also returned. All that took place in an instant, so much so that her mind has also been good and strong since that time, and her body as well, as if she had no illness in the past, and there has been no trace of it since. Her condition was so changed that she took on successfully the principal duties of the monastery and is still the Novice Mistress today.

Now, what causes me to believe that this cure is miraculous, and that it resulted from applying the rochet of the blessed Bishop of Geneva, is that human remedies had no effect, her illness became worse after the rochet had been applied—which usually happens in miraculous cures—and she was cured instantaneously because of the perfect confidence of the Mother Superior. In addition, she herself believes, as surely as if she saw or touched Him, that Our Lord granted her this mercy by the merits of that blessed Bishop and by the application of his rochet. I attest to this because I spoke to the nun during her serious illness and after her cure, and learned the details of it from the Mother Superior and from the nun herself. This took place shortly after her cure, which occurred the day I was making the visitation of the monastery, by authority of the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Archbishop of Paris.²

²Jean-François de Gondy, first Archbishop of Paris (February 19, 1623-March 21, 1654).

**29. - DEPOSITION AT THE PROCESS OF BEATIFICATION
OF FRANCIS DE SALES**

(April 17, 1628)

In the name of the Lord. Amen.

On April 17, 1628, in the eleventh indiction, in the chapel of Saint Monica, of the convent church of the Visitation Nuns of Paris, the Reverend Vincent de Paul, a priest of the Dax diocese, Superior of the Priests of the Mission, and Royal Chaplain of the Galleys of France, was questioned, after being introduced by Reverend Father Juste Guérin¹ of the Congregation of Clerks Regular of Saint Paul, Procurator for this cause. Summoned by the judges and advised of the gravity of perjury, he swore, in the presence of the said judges, with his hand on his heart, as is customary for priests, to tell the truth, concerning both the interrogations and the articles, setting aside all hatred, favor, fear, gain, etc., in this cause, and he answered the pertinent questions of the judges as follows:

To the first he replied:—I know that perjury in all cases, but especially in those of canonizations such as this one, is a very serious mortal sin, which, by the grace of God, I never want to commit.

To the second:—My name is Vincent de Paul; I am an unworthy priest about forty-eight years of age, Superior of the Priests of the Mission, and Royal Chaplain of the galleys of France.

To the third:—I have not only confessed my sins and received Holy Eucharist for Easter, but I also confess several times a week and, by the grace of God, celebrate the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass daily, as a rule.

Document 29. - *Parisian Remissorial Process concerning the life, morals, and miracles of the Servant of God Francis de Sales, transacted in Paris, 1628* (Archives of the Congregation of Rites). This document was published, with its French translation, in *Annales Salésiennes*, 1907, nos. 5-7. The original is in Latin.

Remissorial letters play a vital part in the process of canonization mandated for the Church by Pope Urban VIII (1623-44). As shown here, a lengthy set of questions, composed by the Promoter of the Faith, was sent to the Bishops where the Servant of God was known, and those who knew him were interrogated on each question. These are Saint Vincent's responses to the Remissorial sent to Jean-François de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris. They were given during the remissorial process in Paris.

¹Juste Guérin (cf. II, 31, n. 3).

To the fourth:—No one has told me how or what deposition I should make concerning matters in this cause, nor do I hope for any material compensation, but only the greater glory of God and of His servant Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva when he was alive.

To the fifth:—Never, by the grace of God, have I been accused of any crimes, nor been investigated, nor brought before any judge; nor have I, by name been denounced publicly nor excommunicated.

To the sixth:—I have come here, summoned by Father René Ferrier, ² in the name of the Reverend Mothers, to subject myself to questioning and to swear to tell the truth concerning everything on which I shall be interrogated by you in this cause.

And, passing to the articles contained in the Remissorials, on which he was questioned, he replied:

From the first article to the twenty-third inclusive:—I have nothing to say because I have no knowledge of the matters contained in them.

To the twenty-fourth article, concerning the faith of the aforementioned Servant of God Francis de Sales, he replied:—Many times I had the honor of enjoying the close friendship of Francis de Sales, Bishop and Lord of Geneva, of happy memory. Regarding those things I observed in my dealings with him, as well as other things I learned from those worthy of credence who were with him longer than I, I testify in all truth before God and Christ Jesus that what follows is true. And it is certainly evident to me that he had to an eminent degree an orthodox faith and spared no efforts in his desire to spread it—even to the point of exposing his own life to many dangers—by his ardent zeal to convert the heretics whose numbers had greatly increased over a period of almost seventy years in the Duchy of Chablais, in the territories of Ternier and Gaillard in Savoy, near Geneva, where the faith was almost completely lacking; through his pious efforts and works many thousands of heretics there were converted and returned to the Catholic Church.

These things are true, public, and well known.

²Vice-Postulator in Paris for the cause of canonization of Francis de Sales.

I know, moreover, that the Servant of God was accustomed to convey the sweetness of the same faith to all those who listened to him, both in debating as in hearing confessions, to such a degree that his listeners found it easy and pleasant to follow him when he explained lucidly and clearly the more sublime and obscure mysteries. Because of this it happened that even heretics themselves were in admiration of him, although generally obstinate in the beginning.

And this also is well known and public.

Nor do I think that I should pass over what I heard from his own mouth, in the friendly conversations with him which I enjoyed, that he used to shed tears while rereading the chapters of his own books, for he seemed to realize that he did not write them on his own ability, but by the inspiration of Almighty God. This caused me to experience a certain devotion and tender affection; indeed I felt that the Servant of God was divinely enlightened.

I assert this to be true.

I will add, furthermore, that, because of that same friendship mentioned above, with which he honored me, he opened his heart and told me that he could sense when someone was inwardly moved by his preaching. "For I noticed," he said, "that something went out from me, not through any inspiration of mine and with no forethought, in a way of which I am totally ignorant, but uttered by me through divine impulse."

The outcome was to prove this, for people would approach him after his sermons with compunction of heart, referring to words of his that had moved them interiorly. I believe this is very true, and I am speaking the truth in affirming this testimony that, not only did his words inflame everyone like burning darts, but also that every action of his was a sermon.

These things are true, public, and well known.

To the twenty-fifth article, concerning hope.—I know for certain that the Servant of God, imbued with a most serene peace and great gentleness, directed his steps to his native land. Filled with this abundance, he dispelled all his fears, except that fear which is the chaste companion of love; in addition, always remaining the same, trusting very peacefully in the divine goodness, he was not over-

whelmed by any hardships, no matter how serious. On the contrary, aided confidently by that same divine hope, he showed great energy in lifting the spirits of others, to which all who met him and happily followed his direction can most faithfully testify.

That the Servant of God finished his course steadfastly, justly, and happily is clear from the fact that, at the moment of leaving this life, when asked whether he feared death, he replied that he trusted in the Lord. Again, when asked whether he would be upset to leave the Congregation of the Visitation Nuns in an unfinished state, he replied: "He who has begun it, will Himself perfect it, perfect it, perfect it."³ When someone presented the objection from Ecclesiastes: "Oh how bitter! O death, how bitter is the thought of you!"⁴ he continued it, saying: "for the man at peace amid his possessions." It is clearly apparent from this that, far from earthly considerations, he clung to God alone, in whom he had placed all his hope. And receiving Extreme Unction with a cheerful spirit, he softly answered the prayers of each of the anointings.

Persons worthy of credence have reported these things to me, along with those who have written his life.

To the twenty-sixth article, on the love of God:—The Servant of God loved God with an ardent love; the proofs from which I deduce this are as follows:

1. A most serene peace, sign of the very close bond uniting him to God, which I, as well as many other persons, carefully observed.

2. His efforts to destroy sin, contrary to charity, working assiduously (as everyone knows) equally with the rich as with the needy, without distinction of sex, administering the sacraments, especially Penance, through which sin is abolished.

3. To promote the honor of God more and more (having already overcome sin, which is opposed to it) he made himself accessible to all, without distinction—Religious as well as secular and laypersons—who came to consult him on matters of conscience.

³Cf. Phil 1:6. (NAB)

⁴Cf. Sir 41:1. (NAB)

4. I deduced his most ardent love of God when I observed the very peaceful tranquillity of the Servant of God, proceeding from his recollection in the presence of God, and his very ardent desire for interior dialogue with God, from which he drew the gentlest sentiments in his familiar contact with the Divine; his writings, redolent with them, give testimony to this.

5. I deduce this from his burning desire of conformity to the image of the Son of God, and I observed how the Servant of God conformed himself to Him in this way. Very often when he was in my presence, I marveled how a mere creature could reach such a level of perfection and so sublime a summit of loftiness of spirit, despite human frailty.

6. The fact also that, impelled by the abundant outpouring of Divine Love, he published an immortal and clearly very noble work entitled *Treatise on the Love of God*, a faithful testimony of his most ardent love of God and indeed an admirable book, which has all those who read it proclaiming the gentleness of its author. I took great care to see to it that this book was read in its entirety in our Community as a universal remedy for all who are dispirited, a goad for the sluggish, an incentive to love, and a ladder for those striving for perfection. Would that it might be studied by all, since it is so worthy! There would be no one who could escape its ardor.

To the twenty-seventh article, on his love for the neighbor:—I know for certain that the love of the Servant of God for the neighbor was perfect. I give as evidence of this truth:

(1) The burning desire for each and every person's progress in those things pertinent to salvation, inflaming others with the same ardent, zealous love of God that he himself felt. I observed this in him during private conversations.

(2) That he was deeply imbued with these words of Jesus Christ the Lord, "As long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me,"⁵ is clearly evident when one considers that he never turned anyone away from him, either for temporal or for spiritual matters; in fact, among the regulations he wisely set down for

⁵Cf. Mt 25:40. (NAB)

his household, he especially wanted to ensure that his servants not prevent anyone who wanted to see him from approaching him.

I shall mention only one thing especially, regarding help for the needy, among many works of piety which would be too long to recount, omitting mention of the silver vessels he ordered to be sold to aid those in extreme poverty: when a certain priest indicated to him that he was oppressed by poverty, he immediately looked for a dressing room, removed his own shirt, and handed it to the priest. Today, many miracles are performed through it.

The Servant of God was no less distinguished by his immense charity toward the neighbor in administering spiritual benefits and those conducive to salvation, for which he spared no efforts. On the contrary, he welcomed all comers with his keen, open mind, omitting nothing that could give any hope of salvation, and this to the detriment of his own health. He was motivated by two incentives: first, the great sorrow with which he was tormented by the loss of souls; second, his ardent zeal for their salvation in order that he might be able to restore to the true Shepherd those that were lost.

I learned that these things are true from my private conversations with him, as well as from his reputation among the people.

(3) That he never stopped preaching the Word of God, marvelously transforming souls by it when hearing confessions, administering the other sacraments, and catechizing children in all the places mentioned above, and he did this without sparing himself many inconveniences.

(4) That is obvious to me; I observed it in the very great honor in which he held the faithful workers in the Lord's vineyard, and, on the contrary, in the sorrow he felt at losing any of them when he exchanged this life for death.

(5) The fervor of this Servant of God was distinguished especially in his sermons (which I considered a spoken Gospel), enkindling a powerful flame of spiritual devotion in his listeners. He distinguished himself in private and familiar conversation, in which the participants were spellbound; for he so accommodated himself to the capacity of each one that, considering himself a debtor to all, he would not let anyone who consulted him—be it on a

serious matter or simply a scruple—to leave without being satisfied and filled with consolation. When I reflected on the words of the Servant of God, they stirred such great admiration in me that I was compelled to believe that he was the man who best imitated the Son of God while he was here on earth. What increased my amazement was that such a distinguished man, involved in affairs of the greatest importance, would allow himself to be detained by any person whomsoever, no matter how lowly, sparing no efforts until the person was fully satisfied. He brought about the peace of mind and tranquillity of so many!

These things are true, public, and well known.

*To the twenty-eighth article, on the cardinal virtues:—I. On prudence:—*I know for many reasons that the prudence of the Servant of God was distinguished to an eminent degree.

(1) He established wonderful order and just regulations in his household and in his entire family to such a degree that nothing idle nor upsetting was apparent in his home or family.

(2) He governed his diocese so prudently—despite the fact that it was under diverse jurisdictions, namely that of the King of the French and the Duke of Savoy—that, by keeping the peace with both of them, he succeeded in uniting tranquillity in temporal affairs with that of the spiritual.

(3) By the erection and foundation of a holy Order of nuns under the title of the Visitation Sainte-Marie. With wonderful foresight, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and very holy Constitutions prescribed by him and approved by the Holy See, he gave them an admirable way of life. In this, he directed his intention and all his efforts toward God as to his ultimate end, seeking salvation not only for himself and his religious followers but also for his servants and subjects, for whom he was always very solicitous and concerned.

(4) In settling disputes and calming the movements of spirits and passions; for the prudence of the Servant of God distinguished itself very strongly on these occasions, clearing up all kinds of difficulties, despite many complications, and reestablishing everything so intelligibly that he was admired by all who, unable to resist him, yielded to him by acquiescing.

(5) In transforming the consciences of those entrusted to his direction. Experience has shown that, in a short time, the souls who obeyed the Servant of God made such great progress in spiritual matters that, changed for the better, they despised those things they had formerly loved and lovingly embraced those that were formerly odious to them.

(6) From the fact that, when everything had been settled favorably by him, as in a body already formed by his beneficial advice, with which he was marvelously endowed, he inspired them with the incentive of love—a breath of the Spirit of life, so to speak.

These things are true, public, and well known.

II. *On justice*:—He himself observed it zealously toward the neighbor, doing everything to maintain it very peacefully according to the Will of the Most High God, becoming all things to all people. In his diocese he exhibited a faithful personal presence, vigilance in his duties, obedience to the Supreme Pontiff and to the Church, reverence to God concerning the benefices conferred upon him, and the utmost respect. In addition, so that God might be further glorified, he outshone everyone by his good example, to such a degree that the Servant of God was admired by all who observed him.

Next, he conferred benefices according to merit, and placed persons in the benefices in keeping with the Holy Council of Trent; he gave no one an ecclesiastical office without a testimony that had been obtained beforehand regarding uprightness of life and morals, and without examining them carefully.

These things are true, public, and well known.

III. *On fortitude*:—It is obvious, from the arduous labors assumed and endured by him throughout the whole course of his life, that he was endowed with very great fortitude, as I learned from persons worthy of credence, especially in those things which, during the space of three years, he undertook in converting heretics in the Duchy of Chablais, as well as in Geneva, where, by mandate of the Pope, he went several times, though with great risk to his own life, sparing no difficulties, especially to restore to the bosom of the

Church (as the Supreme Pontiff had ordered him) the heresiarch Theodore de Besze.⁶ Finally, by humbling himself, he promoted only the glory of God, applying himself to the salvation of souls by administering to them the Most Holy Eucharist and the sacrament of Penance.

IV. *On temperance*:—I am an eyewitness to his moderation in calming the passions of the soul and the pleasures of the mind, abstaining from anything that seemed superfluous to him for the body but which others considered as necessities. In this way, he had so subjected the passions and movements of the mind to the command of reason, that not only did he always maintain the same manner of living, but even his appearance remained unchanged in both adversity and prosperity.

On the twenty-ninth article, on chastity:—The Servant of God held chastity in such great esteem that everyone, including me, considered him a virgin.

I learned from those worthy of credence—and those who have written his biography refer to this—that certain women tried to tempt the Servant of God in an enticing way to attract him to themselves, but he himself admonished them and, remorseful, they departed in tears.

On the thirtieth article, on humility:—To summarize many things in a few words, I can say that this blessed Servant of God was respectful to everyone, always disposed and ready to listen to advice; he had less confidence in his own judgment than in that of others. He never avoided the company of common persons, if he had any hope of helping them to advance spiritually. Lastly, the Servant of God always seemed to me to be a perfect, most genuine model of humility.

On the thirty-first article, on patience:—I discerned an admirable patience in him. He was not shaken by insults, nor weakened by hardships, nor upset by infirmities, and courageously endured annoyances and persecutions. He joyfully accepted for Christ reproaches and various temptations, as if they were an immense gain.

⁶John Calvin's chief assistant and successor as leader of Reformed Protestantism (known in France as the Huguenots).

Following Christ, he desired to suffer; in a word, always the same within himself, he put his soul in His hands.

On the thirty-second article, on gentleness.—That there was an admirable gentleness in the Servant of God is apparent in the fact that he never allowed anger to dominate him; he always forced it to be subject to reason to such an extent that people said he had no gall, although the doctors asserted the contrary and said that he repressed his anger by strength of virtue. They proved this later on, when they examined his body and found his gall changed into little stones. I have seen some of these, which are preserved as relics.

These things are true, public, and well known.

On the thirty-third article, on prayer:—I know that among his spiritual exercises he devoted himself zealously to prayer—vocal as well as mental—with such great recollection, tranquillity of mind, and peace that, when he was in choir, which he attended with the Canons for the recitation of the divine praises, he drew the eyes of all to himself, moving them to piety and devotion, so greatly did he unite modesty with dignity in composure of body and soul. I add that, when he was about to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass (which he never omitted, despite his very weighty business affairs), recollecting himself with the greatest sweetness, he entered into himself, doing so even the day before he died. He used to recite the rosary daily in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary with special devotion, meditating on it with such sweetness that it is impossible to put it into words.

These things are true, public, and well known.

On the thirty-fourth article, on the love of enemies:—The Servant of God always regarded this virtue as a companion; he never seemed to lack it on any occasion. A great many examples attest to this. I will only give one, which I learned from a person most worthy of credence and virtuous to an eminent degree. A nobleman, falsely suspecting that a certain person making his will had been persuaded by blessed Francis de Sales to leave something to the Visitation monastery in his city, entered his bedroom with a threatening expression, intending even to inflict serious injuries on him, by punching him in the mouth. Afterwards, however, on seeing that

the Servant of God remained peaceful and unperturbed, he was extremely remorseful and filled with confusion. Returning to him, he knelt down and asked his forgiveness. The latter received him very kindly, saying to him: "I have already forgiven you," and he spoke to him very affectionately.

On the thirty-fifth article, on zeal for the faith and preaching the Word of God:—This faithful servant of the family over which he had been placed by the Lord gave the appropriate spiritual nourishment to everyone, according to the capacity of each, preaching to adults and catechizing children (which he never ceased to do) with such zeal and ardent piety, that he himself wrote in his own hand little notes for the children so that they might be prepared for the things he was about to explain to them. The little ones obeyed him diligently, captivated by the charming gentleness with which he took his time to listen to everything. Abundant fruits resulted from this, for he converted to the faith many heretics who were attracted by his manner; he also drew many sinners back to a better life.

These things are true, well known, and public.

On the thirty-sixth article, on works of mercy:—With no distinction of persons, he did whatever he could to console all the sick, visiting them personally; he distributed his own goods very freely to them in private homes and in prisons, as well as in hospitals. No one lacked necessities, for he helped poor persons through almsgiving, comforted the faint-hearted, raised the spirits of the afflicted with an abundance of the sweetness with which he was filled, refreshed the sad with spiritual delights, and comforted with words of divine wisdom those condemned to death, exhorting them to endure bravely, sharing their sufferings very tenderly in the meantime; when requested by them, he administered the sacraments to them.

These things are true, and are common knowledge.

On the thirty-seventh article, on settling disputes and disagreements:—I touched on this article in article twenty-eight. Here I will relate one of many examples: the reputation of the Servant of God concerning his zeal for obtaining peace and reconciliation also attracted heretics to such a degree that he was able to reconcile persons, once disputes had been settled favorably. Asked by a

nobleman of Geneva, a heretic, to act as judge in resolving a difficulty between himself and the noble Comte de Saint-Alban, he did this so effectively and successfully that both the Catholic and the heretic went away satisfied with the decision—which is something rare.

On the thirty-eighth article, on religion:—The Servant of God possessed the virtue of religion in his heart to an eminent degree. He showed this in all his actions, especially those pertaining to divine worship, the sacred mysteries, and anything related to his own office, in private as well as in public, with such gentle recollection, deep humility, devout attention, and humble majesty that those who observed him could easily see that all his actions seemed to be immersed in the divine mysteries. By this example, he so shone before others that the eyes of all were filled with admiration and it inspired them to devotion.

And lest before God and the angels I seem to have said less than is fitting about his zeal for divine worship, born from the contemplation of divine love, I shall recall here that his abundant, gentle goodness overflowed on those who enjoyed his conversation because of the example of his devotion. I myself shared in those delights, and I recall that, when I was sick in bed about six years ago, I often reflected and mused to myself on God's great goodness! "How good you are, O God, my God, how good you are, since indeed in my Lord Francis de Sales, your creature, there is such great gentleness!"

Everyone has experienced this, and it is common knowledge.

On the thirty-ninth article, on resignation to God:—I know for certain that this Servant of God was endowed with sublime prudence—not so much natural as supernatural—granted by God to discern the interior movements of the soul and the hidden recesses of the mind. He was invited now and then by the Superior of a religious Order, whose name I refrain from mentioning out of respect, to be kind enough to listen to a novice preaching, the first time in a private home. His opinion was asked three times; finally, he replied with a sigh: "I am afraid that this young man needs our sympathy." Within the year, the unfortunate young man apostatized and denied

his religion. When this was announced to the Servant of God, he groaned and, after reflecting for a time, added: "I hope that, in the end, he will obtain the mercy of God." His hope was not in vain, for the young man, prompted by penance, returned shortly afterward to the house he had left, where, after shedding copious tears he was received once again.

These things are true as reported by those who have written his life.

On the fortieth article, on discernment of spirits:—Reverend Father Vincent de Paul had no reply.

On the forty-first article, on magnanimity of spirit:—It is evident that the Servant of God was distinguished by magnanimity of spirit in the heroic, arduous things he did, in prosperity as well as in adversity, because his spirit seemed neither elated nor depressed; for he acted both gently and firmly with the powerful as well as with heretics and those plotting against his life, always proceeding in the same way, directing all things, far from any worldly spirit, to the honor of God and the good of the Church, mindful of his own salvation and that of the neighbor. In all this, he manifested great tranquillity and a humble heart, courageous in prosperous times, and generous in adversity.

These things are true and public.

On the forty-second article, on zeal for the souls entrusted to him:—Zeal for the souls entrusted to him had not only enkindled the heart of the Servant of God but consumed it to such a degree that, in working unceasingly for their salvation, there was nothing he left untried, nothing he did not set in motion. Without sparing himself, he devoted himself entirely to everything conducive to this, especially to hearing their confessions, even at the risk of his health, without distinction of persons or sex, to the admiration of friends and serious persons. Indeed, though he was overwhelmed by inconveniences and hardships, which are necessarily allied in this context, he embraced them both, always taking the time for confessions, since delightful fruits are gathered from them for God.

These things are true and public.

On the forty-third article, on zeal for the perfection of nuns:—This faithful Servant of God was deeply grieved that some spouses of Christ were shamefully possessed by His adversary. He applied himself most zealously to the work of bringing them back from that very wicked tyranny to the freedom of the children of God. He succeeded very well in this. In fact, he reformed many religious houses. But not all were living according to their vows, and, since this man would leave nothing in the possession of the enemy of the human race, especially with regard to religious among whom many scandals arose, he found it difficult to restore them to their proper observance. He founded the Order of the Visitation Nuns of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which, inspired by divine influence, he established with holy Constitutions approved by the Supreme Pontiff Urban VIII, and by which, as the sweetest perfumes emanate from a very pleasant garden, it has gently attracted souls to their twenty-eight monasteries.

These things are true and public.

On the forty-fourth article, on zeal for souls in general:—The Servant of God could not conceal the fire in his own soul without its breaking out at times. To a person of note, Mother de Chantal,⁷ Foundress and Superior of several communities of the Visitation Nuns of the Blessed Virgin Mary, he wrote in these words: “How sweet it is for me and how delightful a work I have undertaken for the salvation of souls!” It is no wonder, then, that so many souls from several provinces, attracted by this spiritual sweetness, entrusted themselves to his direction. But, seeing that he could not provide for so many laypersons and religious scattered over various, distant places, this fervent lover of the salvation of souls, impelled by divine counsel proceeded, despite his involvement in many affairs, to compose the book *Introduction to the Devout Life* to assist them and all those desiring to live the spiritual life. When it was published, everyone found it so pleasing, useful, and necessary that, filled with admiration, they publicly pointed out the Servant of God wherever he went, even in distant regions, exclaiming, “This is

⁷Saint Jane Frances Frémiot de Chantal (cf. VIII, 542, n. 2).

the great Francis from Geneva, who wrote the book *Introduction to the Devout Life!*"

These things are true and public.

On the forty-fifth article, on contempt of the world:—This Servant of God, having tasted the divine honeycomb, totally despised the earthly things which people consider of great value; for this reason he refused many benefices and appointments offered to him. Five times the King of France asked him to come to France and leave behind the duty he had undertaken, but he could not be influenced, even with great promises from the King himself. He willingly disdained honors and dignities in order to be able, as he said, to spend his time with greater freedom as he desired, in spreading the greater glory of God and promoting the salvation of souls. This, I believe, was the reason why he wrote in a certain letter, "I have chosen to be a lowly person in the house of my God rather than to dwell in the tents of sinners."⁸

These things are true and well known.

On the forty-seventh to the fifty-second article inclusive, M. Vincent de Paul replied upon being questioned:—As to those things contained in these articles, I have nothing to say, partly because many things contained in them are not to my knowledge, and partly because what I do know I have already stated in other articles.

On the fifty-third and fifty-fourth articles, on honor and relics:—I know that as soon as the soul of the blessed Servant of God was separated from his body, many people gathered at the place where he was. They invoked him very devoutly on bended knee, as if he were a saint. They took whatever they could as relics: some of his blood, and relics from the body itself when it was dissected, and his clothing as well. Many miracles have taken place through these, some of which are reported by the pious men who have written his life.

Asked about the remaining articles he replied:—I know that in many provinces there was great devotion to the Servant of God because of his reputation for sanctity and the large number of mira-

⁸Cf. Ps 84:11. (NAB)

cles. Besides what occurred publicly, I have noted one thing which happened in the Congregation of the Visitation Nuns of the Blessed Virgin Mary in this city. A nun, attacked by an unknown illness, spewed out blasphemies against the Saints, the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, and God Himself, as often as she was wont to sing His praises; I mean uttering blasphemies and abominable curses while attending Mass, so distinctly and loudly that she was easily heard by those present. When her Superior begged her to perform some act whereby she might offer herself to God, she replied that she had no God other than the devil. Finally, her body and mind were racked with such great violence and raging fury against the Divine Majesty that often she seemed to be prompted to take her own life in order to arrive more quickly in hell, where (horrible to relate!) she could carry out her desire to curse God; this, she said, would be her greatest delight. The Reverend Superior, filled with compassion and sorrow, tried everything: she consulted Prelates and priests belonging to religious Orders, who were all persons renowned in spiritual matters, and doctors recommended by them; she tried their remedies, but to no avail. Finally, the Superior had recourse to the intercession of the Servant of God. She applied a piece of his rochet to the arm of the one who was suffering, and behold! in that moment, the nun was freed. Her soul was filled with great tranquillity, and her appetite and the sleep she had lost gradually returned. In a short time her health was completely restored, and she continues to this day to enjoy good health and sound, keen judgment; so much so, that she has carried out the principal offices of her Congregation, as if she had never experienced anything. Now she has the novices under her direction. I heard from the nun herself the truth of these things to the letter, as well as from her own aforesaid Superior when I went to the house to make the visitation.

For greater assurance of the truth, I, the notary, by mandate of the aforesaid judges, have reviewed the above-mentioned deposition and have reread clearly and distinctly, word for word, what pertains to the witness M. Vincent de Paul, to which he listened in the presence of the judges. He has stated and affirmed anew that the aforesaid matters have been and are true, public, and well known

and that the report of these things is true, public, well known, and common opinion. In faith of which the witness has signed this deposition in his own hand in the presence of the aforesaid judges, who also have signed it in their own hand. I, the notary delegated for this cause, have signed below in my own hand, and to legitimize it have affixed to it my customary notarial seal.

These Acts were executed in Paris in the above place, year, days, month, indiction, and pontificate.

Signed thus in the original draft of these proceedings.

I, Vincent de Paul, Priest of the diocese of Dax in Gascony, have so set down and borne witness to this in all truth.

VINCENTIUS DE PAULO

30. - APPOINTMENT AS SUPERIOR OF THE VISITATION NUNS OF PARIS

(May 9, 1628)¹

Jean-François de Gondi, by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See Archbishop of Paris, to our dearly beloved in the Lord, Maître Vincent de Paul, priest and Bachelor of Theology, greetings in Our Lord.

Be it known to you that, being favorably inclined toward the petition and request presented to us by our dearly beloved sisters and daughters, the Superior and nuns of the Visitation Sainte-Marie of this city of Paris, asking that, in conformity with our authority and their Rules and Constitutions, we might be pleased to entrust some person of known competence and integrity whom we would judge appropriate to be their Spiritual Father and Superior under our direction, we, fully confident in your judgment, experience, piety, and integrity of life, have entrusted to you and have delegated you,

Document 30. - Arch. Nat., LL 1716, fol. 17v^o.

¹Saint Vincent had been Superior of the Visitation nuns in Paris since 1622 (cf. Abelly, *op. cit.*, bk. II, chap. VII, p. 314). The first act of nomination, no longer extant, very likely limited his functions to a six-year term.

and do entrust to you and delegate you by this document, to be, for these reasons, the Spiritual Father of the monastery of the Visitation nuns, to govern and guide them in our name, following and in conformity with the powers attributed to the Spiritual Fathers of their monasteries by the Rules and Constitutions, to the extent and for as long as we so choose.

In witness whereof we have had this document signed by our undersigned secretary and sealed with the seal of our Chamber.

Given in Paris May 9, 1628.

For My Lord the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Archbishop of Paris.

BAUDOUYN

31. - RECEIPT FOR A SUM OF MONEY

(July 27, 1630)

Present was the admirable priest Reverend Messire Vincent de Paul, Principal of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, founded in the University of Paris, living there, near the Porte Saint-Victor, former Pastor of the parish in Clichy-la-Garenne, who acknowledges by this letter having received from the priest Messire Jean Souillard, present Pastor of the parish church in Clichy, by the resignation made to him by the said M. de Paul, the sum of four hundred livres *tournois*, from which M. de Paul has forgiven and released him, canceling the annuity of one hundred livres *tournois* that M. de Paul had reserved to himself and had retained on the parish. ¹ The sum of four hundred livres *tournois* in cash has been paid, counted, reckoned, and delivered by the said Souillard in écus, sous *parisis*, demi-sous, and common currency, all in good gold and silver; and

Document 31. - Office of Maître Paul Tollu, 70 rue Saint-Lazare, Paris, register.

¹This shows that Abelly (*op. cit.*, bk. I, chap. VI, p. 27) was wrong in writing that Saint Vincent "resigned his parish unconditionally" to Jean Souillard "without retaining any annuity from it." These four hundred livres *tournois* represent the arrears for four years, the length of time since the Saint had been Pastor in Clichy.

M. de Paul considered himself satisfied and does consider himself satisfied and well paid with the present sum, and has released and does release Souillard and all others from it, promising, obliging, renouncing, etc.

Drawn up and signed in the presence of the undersigned notaries before noon of Saturday, July 27, 1630, at the Collège des Bons-Enfants, in the room of M. de Paul.

VINCENT DEPAUL	SOUILLARD
CAPITAIN	CHARLES ²

31a. - LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF SAINT VINCENT

(September 7, 1630)

Maître Vincent de Paul, priest, Licentiate in Canon Law, and Principal of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, founded in the University of Paris, on rue Saint-Victor, near the Porte Saint-Victor, being in good health, by the grace of God, coming and going in the city for his business affairs, even to the office of the said Charles, one of the undersigned notaries, was present to draw up and sign what follows.

Considering that nothing here is as certain as death, nor anything more uncertain than the day and the hour of death, he does not wish to leave this world intestate. Therefore, while his judgment and reason rule and govern his thoughts, memory, and intelligence, as is apparent to the notary by his deeds and bearing, he has willed, for the salvation of his soul, to dispose of the few possessions God in His Divine Providence has been pleased to grant him in this lowly, mortal world. For these and other reasons prompting him, he has drawn up and does draw up his last will and testament in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, in the following form and manner.

²Messieurs Capitain and Charles were notaries in Paris.

Document 31a. - Arch. Nat., *Minutier Central*, XVIII, no. 184, fol. 286. The text was published in *Annales C. M.* (1936), pp. 704-07.

First, as a faithful Catholic, he has commended and does commend his soul to God, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, to Saint Vincent his patron,¹ and to all the saints of the heavenly court of paradise, so that, through their prayers and intercession, and through the merits of the Passion and death of Our Savior and Redeemer Jesus Christ, God may be pleased to forgive his faults and offenses. He likewise wishes that his debts be paid off and, if any wrongs have been done, that they be redressed by the executor of his will named below.

Likewise, with regard to the funeral procession with his body and the burial, lights, services, prayers, obsequies, alms, and his place of burial, this is left to the will and discretion of the Priests of the Mission in Paris.² He likewise gives and bequeaths to his brothers Bernard and Menion de Paul, residing in the parish of Pouy, near Dax, each and every one of his paternal and maternal³ possessions and the sums the testator gave them previously and paid for each of them without one claiming anything of what the testator has given and paid in a greater amount to the other. Nevertheless, the testator wills that the said sums be recognized as the property of their children his nephews, and for this purpose that their immovable goods be mortgaged for payment of these for the benefit of those children, whom, to this end, he has substituted and does substitute for his brothers the donees.

He likewise gives, leaves, and bequeaths to Marie de Paul, sister of the testator, the house, woods, and land of Missergent, located in Saint-Paul parish, also near the town of Dax, which had been sold by her husband Grégoire Delartigue to the late Jean de la Cour and his wife Charlotte Dupin, residents of the town of Dax, and which the testator bought back from their heirs, as is stated in the contract

¹Saint Vincent of Saintes; the diocese of Dax had great devotion to this martyr. Vincent de Paul considered Saint Vincent Ferrer his secondary patron.

²The Priests of the Mission apparently knew nothing of this will at the time it was drawn up. The witnesses who signed it were neighbors of the notary, "all living on the Place Maubert," and Saint Vincent designated as its executor "the equerry Louis de Saint-Martin, or, in his place, in case of death, his son Maître César de Saint-Martin."

³There is no record of when Saint Vincent's mother died. In Doc. 27 he bequeaths to his brothers all his "movable and immovable *paternal* goods"; in the present document he bequeaths "his *paternal and maternal* possessions." Might not this addition indicate that his mother had died some time between 1626 and 1630?

signed before de Blois, the royal notary of the town and dated January 21, 1627, and by the act of guardianship by which he was constituted guardian of the minor children of de Paul and Dupin, drawn up by the Seneschal of the Landes or his Lieutenant at the town seat of Dax and stated in the contract. The testator wills and intends that Marie de Paul should give and relinquish in favor of the above-named Bernard and Menion de Paul, his nephew Thomas Daigrand, and their heirs and beneficiaries in the future, half of the lands belonging to and dependent on the house and farm of Missergent. Three-quarters of the half will belong to Bernard and Menion de Paul, and the other quarter to Thomas, unless she prefers to give them a one-time payment of 250 livres for the repurchase of the half of the above-mentioned land bequeathed to Bernard, Menion, and Thomas, which money will be distributed equally to them.

And, as executor of his will, he has chosen and does choose the equerry Maître Louis de Saint-Martin, *sieur* d'Agès, First Counselor of the King in the Court and Seneschalsy of the Landes and presidial seat of the town of Dax, or, in his place, in case of death, his son Maître César de Saint-Martin, to whom and to each of the two and for everything he has given and does give power and authority to execute and carry it out point by point according to its form and terms, increasing and not diminishing, and to do so, has relinquished all his property into the hands of the executors, or to one of them if the other is missing, wishing that they be and remain committed to this until it is carried out in full, submitting the examination and compilation of the account of the testamentary execution to the law, jurisdiction, and constraint of the Seneschalsy of the Landes. The testator himself revokes all other testaments and codicils he may have made before this one, which he adopts as his last will.

This was done, stated, and appointed by the testator before the said notaries. He also had it read and reread to him by one of them in presence of the other and of the clerk Antoine Champineau [*sic*], Pierre Neruet, Nicolas Baudelot, Étienne Porchon, the clerk Louis Poullain [*sic*], the merchant Étienne Benier [*sic*], master shoemaker

in Paris, and Grégoire Espinette, master pastrycook and citizen of Paris, all living on the Place Maubert.

Saturday afternoon, September 7, 1630, and signed by them.

VINCENT DEPAUL

CHAMPIGNAN

NERUET

PORCHON

ESPINETTE

BAUDELLOT

POULAIN

ESTIENNE BENYER

CAPITAIN

CHARLES

**31b. - CANONICAL VISITATION OF THE CONVENT
OF THE MADELONNETTES**

(February 12, 1635)

On February 12, 1635, M. Vincent de Paul made the visitation of this monastery according to the prescribed order.

For this purpose, the Community brought him to the General Chapter, where all the Sisters were assembled both from the house of the Professed Sisters and from the Congregation. He began his exhortation with the main points concerning regularity and the good order of the house. After highly praising the uprightness he had noted in the hearts of the Sisters of this house in their accusations, he recommended principally: prompt and punctual obedience to Superiors; mutual support and charity for the neighbor, both with regard to faults as also to weaknesses; the practice of mortification, particularly regarding silence and refraining from behavior different from others; and avoiding particular friendships as being the plague and total ruination of religious life. In conclusion, he endeavored to inculcate in them, especially the Sisters of the Congregation, a high regard for their vows.

SISTER M. M. ALORGE, *Prioress*

31c. - INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS
RELATIVE TO THE HOSPITALER NUNS
OF THE CHARITY OF OUR LADY

February 13, 1635

On the day and year indicated, before us the undersigned, Fabien Hervé and Claude Moussinot, apostolic notaries of the archdiocesan Court of Paris, there appeared Étienne Binet, Provincial of the Jesuits of the Province of France; Antoine Vigier, Rector of the Priests of Christian Doctrine of Paris; and Vincent de Saint-Paul [*sic*], Superior of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, who stated and declared to us that they had been requested by the Prioress of the Hospitaler Nuns of the Charity of Our Lady of the Place Royale to read the Brief previously written by His Holiness, and to examine what had to be done to enjoy the favor His Holiness is granting to the said nuns. When they had read the Brief and the Constitutions stipulated by the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Archbishop of Paris, and saw that they repeated the ordinance of His Holiness and contained nothing that had not been mandated wisely and in accord with the Council of Trent and the canons and decrees of the Church, they judged that everything was such as is required for the approval of His Holiness and established by apostolic authority, without having to change anything. For all of the above, they have requested the present document of us, granted to them to serve and to be valid in the time and place that are reasonable, and have signed it together with us the aforementioned and undersigned.

ÉTIENNE BINET, *and all the others, with paraphs.*¹
ANTOINE VIGIER VINCENT DE PAUL

Document 31c. - Bib. Nat., ms. n.a.f. 1810, printed in *Annales, C.M.*, vol. 124 (1959), pp. 402-03. The Hospitaler Nuns of Charity, founded by Mother Françoise de la Croix, were confirmed by an Act of Urban VIII of December 14, 1633; their Constitutions were approved on November 12, 1634, by the Archbishop of Paris. Vincent de Paul was a member of the commission responsible for the inspection and certification of their Constitutions.

¹A paraph is a personalized flourish added to one's signature on certain legal documents as an identifying sign; it engenders legal consequences if what the person states in the document is not true.

**31d. - APPROVAL OF THE CONSTITUTIONS
OF THE HOSPITALER NUNS OF THE CHARITY OF OUR LADY
BY THE BISHOP OF SAINTES¹**

(December 10, 1636)

Jacques, by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See Bishop of Saintes, greetings to all those who will read these present letters!

We hereby make it known that, having seen the booklet entitled *Constitutions of the Hospitaler Nuns of the Charity of Our Lady of the Order of Saint Augustine*, established in Paris in the year 1635, by ordinance of November 12, 1634, of the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Archbishop of Paris, with the approval of the said Constitutions within the limits of his diocese, the Brief of Our Holy Father the Pope, of November 14, 1633, for the implementation of the Constitutions, with the attestation of Reverend Fathers Étienne Binet, Provincial of the Jesuits in the Province of France, Antoine Vigier, Rector of the Fathers of Christian Doctrine established in Paris, and Vincent de Saint-Paul [*sic*], priest of the Congregation of the Mission, who, by order of the Archbishop of Paris, had read and carefully examined the Constitutions, which were likewise read and examined at our meeting, we have approved and authorized them. We advise our very dearly beloved daughters in Jesus Christ, the Hospitaler Nuns of the Charity of Our Lady, Order of Saint Augustine, established by our authority in the town of La Rochelle, to keep and observe them on every point, declaring nonetheless that they are not obliged to this under any punishment of mortal or venial sin in themselves, but only to the temporal punishments the Superiors or Mother Superiors might impose. We revoke, if necessary, all other Constitutions we may have approved previously at the time of the establishment of the nuns and declare them null and void in anything that might be contrary to or different from the present ones. Furthermore, we urge them to have an authentic

Document 31d. - Bib. Nat., ms. n.a.f. 1810, 70v.; reprinted in *Annales C. M.*, 124, (1959), pp. 403-04.

¹Jacques-Raoul de la Guibourgère (cf. **VIII**, 241, n. 7).

copy of our present approval printed in the books of the Constitutions, which they will keep in their convent and house in La Rochelle.

Executed in our episcopal palace in Saintes, at the meeting held this December 10, 1636.

JACQUES OF SAINTES

By order of His Excellency
JULLIOT

32. - TESTIMONY CONCERNING ABBÉ DE SAINT-CYRAN¹

(March 31, April 1 and 2, 1639)

I, Vincent de Paul, Superior of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, about fifty-nine years of age, having sworn to tell the truth upon my Holy Orders, acknowledge that these are the facts and replies I then made before M. Lescot,² Doctor of Theology and Royal Professor of Theology, delegated by His Eminence the Cardinal, Duc de Richelieu,³ by virtue of the commission given to His

Document 32. - Bibliothèque Mazarin, Ms. 2481, fol. 287-91. Collet (vol. I, p. 266) states that this document is the work of eighteenth-century Jansenists, but its authenticity is supported by the words "about fifty-nine years of age." In the eighteenth century the Jansenists believed, as did everyone, that Saint Vincent had been born in 1576; consequently, the forger would have written "about 63 years of age." (Cf. Pierre Coste, "La vraie date de la naissance de saint Vincent de Paul," in *Bulletin de la Société de Borda* [Dax, 1922]; and by the same author, *Rapports de saint Vincent de Paul avec l'abbé de Saint-Cyran* [Toulouse: A. Nauze, 1914], p. 30 ff.)

¹Jean du Verger de Hauranne, Abbé de Saint-Cyran, was born in Bayonne in 1581. He had met Saint Vincent in Paris around 1622 and soon struck up a friendship with him. According to his nephew, Martin de Barcos (cf. *Défense de feu M. Vincent de Paul*), he had supposedly rendered important services to the Saint, and the Congregation of the Mission was in some measure indebted to him for the possession of the Collège des Bons-Enfants and for Saint-Lazare, as well as for the Bull of approbation obtained from the Roman Court. What is certain is that their meetings, rather frequent while Saint Vincent was living at the Bons-Enfants, became more rare after 1632 and almost ceased from 1634 on. In 1638 Saint-Cyran was arrested by order of Cardinal Richelieu and imprisoned at the Château de Vincennes. Shortly after the Cardinal died in 1642, Louis XIII allowed the prisoner to communicate with people outside. This measure of clemency was soon followed by a second: on February 16, 1643, Saint-Cyran was set free. He did not, however, enjoy the royal favor for long, dying of a cerebral hemorrhage on October 11 of the same year.

²Jacques Lescot, future Bishop of Chartres (cf. IV, 159, n. 1).

³Armand du Plessis, Cardinal Richelieu (cf. VIII, 405, n. 6).

Eminence by the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Jean-François de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris, concerning the case brought against Abbé de Saint-Cyran, detained as a prisoner in the château of the Bois de Vincennes because of some private opinions contrary to the Church, which he is accused of holding.

I acknowledge that the letter shown me by M. Lescot, which I signed with my paraph in my own hand, is the very one written and sent to me by M. de Saint-Cyran, dated Paris, November 20, 1637, and signed with the name of Abbé de Saint-Cyran, and composed of four and a half pages.⁴

In addition, I state that I have known M. de Saint-Cyran for about fifteen years and that, during that fifteen-year period, I had rather frequent contacts with him and considered him one of the finest men I ever saw.

Toward the end of the year 1637, around October, I went to see M. de Saint-Cyran at his home in Paris, opposite the Carthusians, and I informed him of the rumors circulating concerning him, namely, regarding certain opinions or practices contrary to Church practice, which people were saying he held. I do not recall the number, but I do remember one of them, which is that he was making some persons do penance for three or four months before giving them absolution, and a few others that are given below.

He received this advice very calmly, and I do not recall clearly the answer he gave me at the time. This took place between M. de Saint-Cyran and me alone; no one else was present.

I think Abbé Olier,⁵ Abbé Caulet,⁶ and Abbé de Prières⁷ had told me that M. de Saint-Cyran held to the above-mentioned practice and had told me many other things about him, which I do not remember.

Abbé Caulet told me he had spoken with Abbé de Saint-Cyran, and it had seemed to him that he had some opinions peculiar to him. I think that, when he asked me if I thought he should go to him for

⁴Cf. I, 392-96.

⁵Jean-Jacques Olier (cf. VIII, 400, n. 1).

⁶François-Étienne de Caulet (cf. VIII, 162, n. 3).

⁷Jean Jouhaud, secretary of the Abbot of Cîteaux.

spiritual direction, I told M. Caulet that, since he was having difficulty with those opinions, he should not follow his direction, and I am not sure whether I told him not to go to see him.

I do not know when I received the letter in question, nor who sent it to me, nor brought to me.

He never told me what he had against our Congregation, nor what were the failures he mentioned in his letter.

I do not recall ever having forbidden the members of our Congregation to go to see M. de Saint-Cyran.

I do not know what he means in his letter about having criticized the beginnings whereby our Congregation was established in the places where it is, nor the public objection he mentions having made in his letter, and for giving reasons that changed the mind concerning it of the person to whom we are totally obliged for our establishment, unless he means the lawsuit we had against the monks of Saint-Victor and the help he gave us with that.

Neither do I know to what persecution he is referring in the same letter as having suffered, and in which he states that I abandoned him, nor what that upheaval is, nor the triple conspiracy he says was plotted against him.

Neither do I know what good turn he says he wanted to do for our Congregation but was prevented from doing by me, unless by that he means what he says about my being unwilling to follow his advice regarding our Congregation. Now, he never gave me any advice regarding the direction of the Company.

Since his return I have seen M. de Saint-Cyran once at his residence in Paris, and we said nothing there about the contents of the letter, except that I told him first of all that I thanked him for confiding in me, unburdening himself in the said letter of what he had suffered.

I do not remember having told anyone that I had received that letter and that I kept it, unless it was M. Dauzenat, who at the time was chaplain of the Duchesse d'Aiguillon⁸ and is now the Cardinal's Superintendent of Finance.

⁸Marie de Vignerod (cf. VIII, 8, n. 5).

I kept the letter to show that I did not share the practice of M. de Saint-Cyran, nor the opinions for which he was being criticized, in the event that someone should inquire about that.

As soon as M. de Laubardemont had spoken to me on behalf of the Cardinal concerning the letter—or two days later—I brought the letter to His Eminence, and that same day I told M. Lescot that I had it.

Neither M. Barcos⁹ nor M. Singlin¹⁰ came to see me to ask me not to say anything against M. de Saint-Cyran.

I have never called M. de Saint-Cyran my teacher.

I do not know why the letter was not closed; I do remember that it was in a sealed paper envelope and there was no other letter with it.

Three days ago I learned from a man named M. Tardif that a copy of the letter was found among M. de Saint-Cyran's papers, which were seized at the time of M. de Saint-Cyran's imprisonment and that the copy was in the handwriting of the Superior of the Visitation Monastery of Poitiers.¹¹ I think he added that the original had been sent to me by that Superior, but I know nothing about that.

I never received any letter from that Superior concerning the opinions and practices imputed to M. de Saint-Cyran, not even anything about the letter or any other topic, except one or two that I received about four years ago concerning the establishment of the Visitation Monastery in Poitiers, for which I used my influence with M. de Saint-Cyran to get him to write the Bishop of Poitiers¹² about it.

And that is all I know about that letter.

As for what concerns the other articles on which I was also questioned by M. Lescot, I say that, with regard to the one about whether or not I heard M. de Saint-Cyran say that God has been destroying His Church for five or six hundred years, citing those words of Solomon, *tempus destruendi*,¹³ and that corruption had seeped into it,

⁹Martin de Barcos, nephew of Abbé de Saint-Cyran and a major apologist for Jansenism.

¹⁰Nicolas Singlin (cf. IV, 593, n. 4).

¹¹Mother Anne de Lage.

¹²Henri-Louis Chastaignier de La Rocheposay.

¹³*The time for destroying.* Cf. Eccl 3:3. (NAB)

even into doctrine, I reply that I did hear him say those words just one time, about God destroying His Church and also that it seems therefore that those who defend it are acting contrary to His intention. And I think he said that as a follow-up to some discourses on the judgments of God and the corruption of morals. At first this declaration upset me, but I have since thought that he was saying it in the sense I have been told that Pope Clement VIII ¹⁴ said he wept when he saw that, while the Church was spreading in the Indies, it seemed to him that it was being destroyed here. As for what he says about thinking that those who defend it are acting contrary to the intention of God, I think this should be explained by the actions in the life of M. de Saint-Cyran, who was, for the most part, in favor of defending the Church. Witness his writings and what he was having done for the salvation of souls. As for the rest of the article, I never heard him speak of that.

On the request as to whether I heard M. de Saint-Cyran say that the Pope and most Bishops, Pastors, etc. do not constitute the true Church, lacking a vocation and the spirit of grace, I reply that I never heard him say what is contained in the said request, except for one time, when he said that many Bishops were children of the Court and had no vocation. Yet, I never saw anyone show greater respect for the episcopate, nor for some Bishops, such as the late Bishop of Comminges, ¹⁵ as he did. He also had great esteem for the late Bishop of Geneva, Francis de Sales, and he used to call him blessed.

Asked whether I heard him say that the Council of Trent ¹⁶ changed and altered the teaching of the Church and was not a legitimate Council, I reply that I never heard him say that, nor that there had been any intrigues in the Council.

Questioned as to whether I heard him say that it is an abuse to give absolution immediately after confession, as is the usual practice, and that satisfaction had to be made beforehand, I reply that I never heard him say that it was an abuse to act in the way mentioned

¹⁴Pope Clement VIII (1592-1605).

¹⁵Barthélemy de Donnadieu de Griet.

¹⁶Council of Trent (1545-63).

in the question. I did hear him speak of penance before absolution, but I do not recall in what terms. Experience shows, however, how he understood what is contained in the request because he had us give the mission in the parishes that depend on his abbey of Saint-Cyran and offered us many times a priory he had near Poitiers in order to do the same in the Poitiers diocese. And everyone knows that we do what is contained in the article.

Asked whether I heard him say that the just person should have no other law than the interior inspirations of grace to live in the freedom of the children of God, and that vows are imperfect, being opposed to that freedom of the Spirit of God, I reply that I never heard him utter those words that the just should have no other laws than the interior inspirations of grace, nor cite these words of Saint Paul *Justo lex non est posita*.¹⁷ But I do not recall in what terms he spoke advantageously of the interior inspirations of grace, nor why he cited the words of Saint Paul. As for the vows, I am not sure I heard him say the words in the question. I do know, however, that he helped one of his nephews to become a Capuchin in the province of Toulouse, and he himself took the son of one of his friends to the reformed Carmelites.

Asked whether he said that the Jesuits and other new religious who get involved in clerical functions should be ruined, I reply that I heard him criticize some opinions of the Jesuits, especially concerning grace, and I think I heard him say that, if he had the power to ruin the Jesuits—or one of them—he would do so, although I heard him say many wonderful words of praise about the first members of their Order. I think, in addition, that I heard him say that he wished no harm to the Company of Jesuits and would give his life for it and for each of its members. This makes me think that by ruining the Jesuits he meant that, if it depended on him, he would withdraw from them the permission to teach theology. As for what is in the rest of the article, however, I know nothing.

Concerning several articles—such as whether perfect contrition is absolutely necessary for the sacrament of Penance; whether sac-

¹⁷The law is not aimed at the just. Cf. 1 Tim 1:9. (NAB)

ramental absolution may be given only to those who are truly contrite; that absolution does not pardon the sin but declares only that it is already pardoned, that is, in virtue of the contrition that preceded it and must precede absolution; that venial sins are not sufficient matter for sacramental absolution; that it is not necessary to confess the number of mortal sins nor the circumstances which change the kind of sin; that true faith is not distinguished from charity; that the Church has not been the true Church for six hundred years,—for these articles, I say, and for many others on which I was questioned by M. Lescot, I reply that I never heard M. de Saint-Cyran say those things. And that is all I know about M. de Saint-Cyran.

I have written everything above with my own hand and, after having reread it, I have maintained it and signed it.

VINCENT DEPAUL

33. - INTERROGATION OF ABBÉ DE SAINT-CYRAN

(May 14-31, 1639)

(1) When asked whether or not he had had any communication and was on familiar terms with M. Vincent, Superior of the Priests of the Mission:

He stated that, when M. Vincent was living at the Collège des Bons-Enfants, they saw each other more often than they had since he has been living at Saint-Lazare, but since then he had seen him only in passing; that he sometimes came to dinner at his house, even since he has been at Saint-Lazare; and that, for a few years now, there has not been much contact or communication between them—for three or four years.

Document 33. - *Recueil de plusieurs pièces pour servir à l'histoire de Port-Royal, ou Supplément aux Mémoires de Messieurs Fontaine, Lancelot, et du Fossé* (Utrecht: n.p., 1740), pp. 22ff. The text published in this work is the same as the copy conserved in the Bibl. Nat. (f. fr. 17.804). From this interrogation we give only what concerns the relationship between Saint-Cyran and Saint Vincent.

(5) When asked whether or not M. Vincent made some reproaches to him or gave him some charitable advice regarding matters that concerned him, M. Saint-Cyran:

He stated that, when M. Vincent came to say good-bye to him as he was about to leave for his abbey,¹ he mentioned four things to him. The first thing M. Vincent said to Saint-Cyran was that in the past the latter had told him that repentance postponed until the end of life when one was sick was not very certain. Another is that he had also told M. Vincent that he wanted to give him some advice concerning the direction of the Company of which he is Superior. He states that the other two are even less important and says he does not remember them.

(6) When asked whether or not M. Vincent has written to him since then concerning the things mentioned above:

He stated that M. Vincent did not write to him, but he had written to M. Vincent.

(7) When asked whether or not, in the letter he wrote to M. Vincent, he spoke to him of other matters:

He said "No."

(8) We showed M. Saint-Cyran a five-page letter addressed to "M. Vincent, Superior of the Mission," beginning with the words "Monsieur, since the last time I had the honor," and closing "to take that of Monsieur, your, etc.," and dated Paris, November 20, 1637,² in M. de Saint-Cyran's handwriting, as he told us. Asked whether or not he had written the letter to M. Vincent:

He acknowledged that he had written the letter, signing it and adding his paraph before our registrar, and this is what he mentioned previously.

(9) When questioned about what dying person M. de Saint-Cyran was speaking at the beginning of the letter when he said he had been "sick for a month because of a bad effect he felt that a dying person, whom he had attended throughout one night, had left on him":

¹It is stated in a note that "this was the previous October."

²Cf. I, 392-96. This part of the interrogation is based on the contents of that letter, from which the examiner is quoting.

He stated that it was Mme. d'Andilly, who died of a hemorrhage.

(10) When asked what he meant by the words "bad effect":

He stated that he meant the infection in the room where the lady died, which caused him to have a similar hemorrhage.

(11) When asked what he meant by "the last conversations" he said "M. Vincent had with him":

He stated that they were those four things he mentioned above.

(12) When asked what he meant by the words in the letter, "I had others in my soul, of which you are unaware, and for which I have reason to fear the judgments of God":

He stated that he meant the memory of his sins, which he had in mind, in his uncertainty about the outcome of his very serious illness.

(13) When asked what he meant by the words "of the Catholic truths that were considered lies and falsehoods by those who preferred glitter and flash to the light of truth and virtue":

He stated that, by the words "Catholic truths" he meant the four things mentioned above, among which the first is so true that the ancient Fathers and Doctors and the Directors of that time were all in agreement on it, that Saint Augustine said in the name of all of them, *There is no repentance in the grave*; that Granada,³ in an entire discourse he gives on this point, cites five reasons from Joannes Scotus;⁴ and that the other three points are not of greater consequence, nor even less accepted by everyone.

(14) When asked if it is true that, by those four truths he says are so well known and accepted by everyone, he means something other than what he states, how is it possible that they are "regarded as lies and falsehoods by those who prefer glitter and flash to the light of truth and virtue," since it is certain, furthermore, that those who love the light and radiance of virtue are very careful not to believe that one has to wait until a serious illness at the end of life to do penance:

³Luis de Granada, the Spanish Dominican renowned for his holiness, sermons, and writings.

⁴John Duns Scotus, Franciscan philosopher and theologian, was born in Scotland about 1266, died in Cologne on November 8, 1308, and was beatified in 1993.

He stated that he had said those things very simply, and no less for the first truth than for the others, which he does not remember. And although he does not remember all the ideas he had in mind in writing the letter, and that the words quoted above may have perhaps been written for the other two points—which he has forgotten—they can be understood very well of those who are satisfied with the externals of religion, with no concern for doing true penance, trusting too much in the mercy of God. He could also have had in mind at that time these words of Saint Augustine: *They love the glittering truth; they hate the contrary*, and states that, if he recalls the other things he has forgotten, he will say them quite freely.

(15) When asked what he meant by the words “the disposition of humility that you have deep in your heart to believe what people will have you read in the sacred books causes me to be sufficiently aware that nothing was easier than for you to accept, by the very testimony of your own eyes, what you now detest as errors,” and especially, when asked what he meant by the words “what you now detest as errors”:

He stated that he meant those four things mentioned above, as is clear from what follows, and that, because he believed that M. Vincent was truly humble, he would willingly accept them, seeing them written in the sacred books and in the Fathers.

(17) When asked what he means by “that fifth correction added to the other four” which he says M. Vincent had given him:

He stated that it is the one previously placed last of the four.

(18) When asked whether the things of which he speaks in these terms, “I decided that it was not the time to defend myself and to show you by clear, genuine proofs the importance of those things you judge to be bad, even to condemning them rashly without understanding them,” are all the same things he mentioned above:

He stated that they were all the same things, and no others.

(20) When asked whether or not he considers M. Vincent to be an upright, honorable, discreet, judicious, and well-advised man:

He replied that he considers him a charitable man of good will who professes to be prudent.

(21) When asked whether he actually believed him to be prudent and an upright man:

He stated that he believes M. Vincent is prudent but may make mistakes through lack of insight and understanding concerning matters of doctrine and learning, and not through lack of good will, and he considers him an upright man.

(22) When asked whether those four points mentioned above are the cause of his suffering the persecution he underwent, as he said in the letter:

He said "No," and that it was because people were unhappy with what had taken place in the Blessed Sacrament house.⁵

(23) When asked whether or not he remembered at least if those four points were important:

He stated that they were trivial and of no importance and such that, as far as he could remember, his worst enemies had never reproached him for them, and that it was so easy to reply to them that, when he, Saint-Cyran, had referred them to a learned man as soon as M. Vincent left, the man found it extraordinary that he had treated M. Vincent so gently.

(24) When asked how it is possible for him to have forgotten those points, since he recalls so well that they were trivial and of no consequence, and that he had even spoken to a learned man about them, and that this learned man was surprised that he had not replied forcibly enough to M. Vincent, and who was that learned man:

He replied that people often forget the gist of things but remember the circumstances, and that the learned man of whom he was speaking is a nephew of his, named M. de Barcos.

(25) When asked again how it could be that those points slipped his mind, given the fact that M. Vincent went to see him at his home, and that he wrote M. Vincent a long letter, mentioned above, with regard to the points in question, and that he could have written the

⁵The Institute of the Blessed Sacrament had been founded in Paris, on rue Coquillière, by Sébastien Zamet, Bishop of Langres (cf. I, 277, n. 9), with the collaboration of Mère Marie-Angélique Arnauld, Abbess of Maubuisson. The nuns there honored Jesus in the Eucharist in a very special way by perpetual adoration. (Concerning this Institute see Louis N. Prunel, *Sébastien Zamet, évêque-duc de Langres, pair de France (1588-1655)* [Paris: Picard, 1912], pp. 208ff.)

letter only “after letting the time pass that was necessary to let the heat escape which had risen to his [Saint-Cyran’s] head,” as he says in the letter, so he could reflect and meditate a long time on what M. Saint-Cyran had told him, and whether it is believable that he forgot those points that are so detailed, but also some points that he calls in the letter “Catholic truths” and which he affirms are “detested” by M. Vincent as errors:

He stated that he did, in fact, forget and that he delayed writing the letter to M. Vincent only to manifest his friendship for him. For, instead of saying anything to others, or speaking about the others who had persecuted him so much, he wanted to register his complaint with him so he would not think he harbored any resentment concerning what he had come to tell him at his own home, but also to let M. Vincent know that he was wrong in believing that M. de Saint-Cyran was mistaken, since the first thing with which he had reproached him, as M. Saint-Cyran had told him in the past, is a Catholic truth, held as such by the Ancients and Doctors of that time.

(26) When asked how it is possible that M. Vincent, whom M. Saint-Cyran has said is an upright, honorable, well-advised, and very discreet man, and who, as he stated in the letter, “professes to be so gentle and reserved,” dared to come to the home of M. Saint-Cyran to reproach him for the proposition that repentance, put off to a time of serious illness at the end of life, was not a very sure thing; which proposition, he stated above, is so true that it is held by the Ancient Fathers and all the Doctors of the time, and a few other propositions which he stated above were no less certain, and which do not bother him any more than the proposition above:

He stated that, although he did use the term “reproach” in his letter, he did not think M. Vincent had come to say those things to him with that intention, but had come, in his opinion, to say farewell to him because he was about to go to his abbey, so he said them by chance, more to protect himself from the reproach of M. Saint-Cyran of having abandoned him than to accuse him of any error; and what followed makes it clear that M. Vincent wanted to remove from him any cause of complaint and to be reconciled with

him because, as he was leaving, he offered him a horse as a gift for his journey, which he accepted and would give back to him on his return, as a sign to him that he wanted to remain on friendly terms with him, as usual. As for the other two forgotten propositions, he said they were trivial and of no consequence because they were similar to the first one mentioned above and it was easy to consider them as being either Catholic truths or as errors falsely attributed to M. Saint-Cyran.

(27) When asked how M. Saint-Cyran could believe that a discreet man like M. Vincent could condemn such propositions in order to be totally reconciled with M. Saint-Cyran, and that Saint-Cyran said he considered the contrary propositions to be lies and falsehoods and detested them as errors as Saint-Cyran told him, and that M. Vincent was at peace with that and left him in that state:

He stated that, if it is true that M. Vincent objected to him that the above-mentioned proposition was erroneous, and was led to infer something bad from the advice he tried to give to his Company—and which might put the teaching of M. Saint-Cyran in an unfavorable light—he could likewise have been mistaken in the other two; nevertheless, since he was doing that innocently and with all good will as regarded M. Saint-Cyran, he stopped short after hearing the first reply of M. Saint-Cyran, who did not go into the particular points about which M. Vincent had spoken to him. That was why, when M. Vincent saw that he was a little upset, he tried to calm him down and, for this purpose, offered him a horse for his journey to his abbey.

(28) When asked if he could tell at the time that M. Vincent had changed his mind and renounced the propositions he had previously believed:

He stated that the offer M. Vincent made him of his horse caused him to think that perhaps M. Vincent regretted having put them forward and upsetting him.

(29) When asked how M. Saint-Cyran, when writing to M. Vincent, spoke to him in the following terms, as to a man who still held the same errors, "There is nothing easier than for you to accept, by the very testimony of your own eyes, what you now detest as er-

rors”; and further on, “I decided that it was not the moment to defend myself but to show you, by clear, genuine proofs, the importance of those things you judge to be bad, even condemning them rashly without understanding them”:

He stated that, after the propositions made by M. Vincent to M. Saint-Cyran and his rejection of them in general—with some mild emotion on the part of M. Saint-Cyran, since he was somewhat surprised—nothing in particular was said to clarify these propositions, and M. Vincent, after an outburst of temper exceptional for him, returned to his composure and customary silence; that is why Saint-Cyran wrote him the letter to explain calmly to him his opinions regarding the propositions. It is likely that there was some other proposition similar to the first one; for, otherwise, he would have been careful not to speak like that, even though it sufficed that the first should be so, to make authentic the words of his letter, in which he used the word “detest” ironically; for he knows full well that the reactions of M. Vincent are not that vehement, nor his words so extreme.

(30) When asked what irony he could find in the last words by which he states that M. Vincent considered his propositions “bad, going so far as to condemn them rashly without understanding them”:

He stated that, since they were truths and not errors, it is a mockery to detest them; nevertheless, he wrote to M. Vincent in those terms because the latter had not overtly renounced those propositions he had made to him, since he brought forward nothing on either side to clarify the truth or the falsehood of the propositions.

(31) When asked whether he knew that M. Vincent thought the advice he wanted to give the Company of M. Vincent was bad and to the disadvantage of the teaching of the Church, as M. Saint-Cyran seems to insinuate in a reply he gave above:

He stated that one of the things that offended M. Saint-Cyran more was that, after M. Vincent had spoken to him about the proposition concerning repentance of the dying, he also added that in the past he had told M. Vincent that he wanted to give him some advice regarding his Company. That made him think that M. Vincent felt

there might be something bad in the advice. He said to leave that for M. Vincent to explain.

(32) When asked whether or not he recalled—at least vaguely—that among the points he mentioned above there might be something contrary to the teaching or common practice of the Church:

He said “No.”

(33) M. Saint-Cyran, being warned to tell the truth and to declare frankly and sincerely what he meant by those four points about which he said M. Vincent had spoken to him, it not being at all likely from all the above that those points could be understood in the way he said:

He stated that he told the truth as he would before God and had spoken as far as possible as he was inspired by God, having always in his heart the words of the Apostle, *We speak before God in Christ*.⁶ He declared that he prayed beforehand, trying to remember those propositions, and that he was very sorry to have forgotten them, since he was sure there was nothing in them contrary to Catholic truth and the practice of the Church.

(34) When asked whether or not M. Vincent had spoken to him since that time about those four points and the letter written by him to M. Vincent:

He stated that M. Vincent, on his return, had come to see him, and he told him he had never received a greater sign of friendship from M. Saint-Cyran than when the latter had written him the said letter, and M. Vincent asked M. Saint-Cyran if he had shown the letter to any other persons. When he said “No,” M. Vincent thanked him, stating he was much obliged to him; and he thinks that M. Vincent had dinner with him that day.

(35) When asked whether or not they spoke about those points in that interview:

He stated that, as far as he could recall, they did not mention them at all.

⁶Cf. 2 Cor 12:19. (D-RB)

(36) When questioned on the identity of those who he said “preferred glitter and flash to the light of truth and virtue”:

He replied that he was speaking in general, with no one particular in mind, and that this occurred to him from reading chapter 23 of Saint Matthew’s Gospel and chapter 11 of Saint Luke, where the Son of God reproaches the Jews for taking more care to embellish the exterior than the interior and compares them to whitened sepulchers,⁷ and elsewhere, speaking of the foolish and wise virgins, who represent the whole Church, He teaches us that both the good ones and bad ones *all* had their lamps, but some had no oil in theirs.⁸

(37) When questioned as to “the good service” he said he wanted to render M. Vincent and his whole house:

He stated that by the term “good service” he meant the advice mentioned above; he felt obliged to do this because of his inclination to help all the Communities he knew, and also because he felt obliged to be of service to M. Vincent and his Company, since he himself came in the first place to seek his friendship shortly after the death of M. de Monthelon, a friend of M. Vincent, and also because of the happiness he had of helping him with his establishment of Saint-Lazare, which he never would have done since it was only a temporal matter, in which he never became involved, and he would not have become so involved if he had not thought he was helping him also in a spiritual matter, as he had been encouraged by the reports M. Vincent sent to Rome on his advice, but he did not now wish to speak of what he wanted to give M. Vincent.

(38) When asked about what he wanted to give M. Vincent:

He stated that he wanted to give him a priory and that it was M. Vincent’s fault that he did not get it.⁹

(39) When asked about the advice he wanted to give M. Vincent and his Company, and whether he had given it:

He stated that he has not given M. Vincent any advice since he was established at Saint-Lazare and took over the direction of the

⁷Cf. Mt 23:27, Lk 11:44. (NAB)

⁸Cf. Mt 25:1-13. (NAB)

⁹A note states that this was “Bonneville Priory, which belonged to M. de Saint-Cyran before he possessed his abbey.”

ordinands, which occurred one year after the Company of M. Vincent had been approved by the Court and established at the Collège des Bons-Enfants.

(40) When asked whether or not, before the said time, he had given some advice to M. Vincent and his Company:

He said "No," and that M. Vincent was in no way influenced by his advice, and it seemed that, since his establishment at Saint-Lazare, M. Vincent had avoided asking his advice, not so much because he thought he was not well informed as perhaps because of his fear that he might give him advice that was too strong and disproportionate to the intention M. Vincent had of establishing and guiding his Company gradually. This has become more apparent to him ever since unfavorable rumors have been circulated against him, satisfying himself with seeing him only occasionally.

(41) When asked what advice he wanted to give him:

He stated that he knew nothing in particular about that, and that people know he is as slow to give advice as he sometimes seems ardent in wanting to give it, and that he only takes it from the source, after pondering the rules and directions God has left us in His Church.

(42) When asked what he means by this source:

He stated that it was God, who has *Counselor* as one of His titles.

(43) When asked whether he thinks he never gives any advice that does not come from God:

He stated that he means only that he prays for a long time before giving any advice.

(44) When asked if he disapproved of the establishment of M. Vincent and his Company and M. Vincent's care of the ordinands:

He stated that he was very careful not to disapprove of it, since he helped him with the lawsuit he had for the Saint-Lazare house, well aware that the Archbishop of Paris ¹⁰ gave his consent only on that condition. He did find it strange, however, that he added that to his original plan one year after having been approved, and he thinks he

¹⁰Jean-François de Gondî.

could have had good reasons for doing so, which M. Saint-Cyran respects, although he is ignorant of them.

(45) When asked how he could state above that he did not recall any specific advice he wanted to give M. Vincent, considering that he just said that M. Vincent did not ask his advice, perhaps because M. Vincent was afraid that he might give him disproportionate advice, too strong for his Institute:

He said that this had nothing to do with it and that it sprang perhaps from M. Vincent's thinking wrongly that he was much too severe, and whom he perhaps judged lacking in condescension; he respects M. Vincent's thinking on this.

(46) When asked about the persecution he mentions in his letter, which he says he had to endure:

He stated that it has nothing to do with the present affair.

(48) When asked again to tell us the identity of those persecutors and the nature of that persecution:

He stated that the leader of that persecution is the person who presented a report against him to His Eminence, and that others were involved in it because of interests of their own.

(49) When asked what leader presented the report, the nature of that report, and how he knows that the report was presented by the leader to His Eminence:

He stated that, before he was detained, the report was presented by the Bishop of Langres, ¹¹ whose name he had not wanted to give.

(55) When questioned about the persecution against him, of which the Bishop of Langres was the leader:

He stated that the persecution consisted in spreading false rumors against him.

(56) When asked what false rumors were spread against him:

He stated that he was accused of teaching false doctrine, such as rejecting the Council of Trent, condemning the whole Church and its practices and sacraments, especially the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist; and that he maintained that the priest did not absolve, but he declared that absolution had already been given; that

¹¹Sébastien Zamet.

the sacrament of Confirmation did everything and that sacrament removed guilt and punishment; and that, in addition to all these things, of which the rumors are public, the Bishop of Langres, in ways unknown to him, was secretly behind several bad reports against him, using all sorts of persons whom he felt were the right people for that.

(57) When questioned regarding those reports:

He stated that the Bishop of Langres had bought his bishopric, or his father had bought it for him.¹²

(77) When asked whether or not he found a place to live near the Carthusians in order to visit the nuns of Port-Royal more often:

He stated that he left the house in the Cloître-Notre-Dame only when he had to do so, and did his best to find another house in the Cloître. Not finding any, he asked M. Vincent to let him use a room in the Collège des Bons-Enfants for the winter, but M. Vincent could not do this so he had to be satisfied, when approached by M. de Marcheville, with taking half of his apartment, located near the Carthusians, left vacant by M. d'Igou.

(80) When questioned about how he knew Mother Anne de Lage, Superior of the Visitation convent in Poitiers:

He stated that Mlle. d'Abain, foundress of that house, had asked him in Paris to negotiate with the Visitation nuns in Paris for the foundation they intended to make in Poitiers of one of their houses. Unable to refuse them this service because of his obligations toward the Archbishop of Poitiers,¹³ he asked M. Vincent to do it, which he did.

(90) When questioned about how and why M. Vincent abandoned him, as he states in the letter written by him to M. Vincent, in the midst of the "persecution" he claims to have endured:

¹²A note states that "this reply is confusing, and Saint-Cyran deliberately made it so. The reason will be seen in the letter used in this interrogation (cf. I, 392-96.). Furthermore, there is every reason to believe that one of the four warnings Saint-Cyran gave the Bishop of Langres when he was sick concerned the manner by which he had entered the episcopate. The Prelate received them very well, and, when he recovered from his illness, he wrote to Saint-Cyran about resigning his diocese. Not wishing to get involved in this business, Saint-Cyran did not reply to him; this vexed the Bishop, who wrote to him a second time, informing him that he wanted to discuss it with M. Olier. Saint-Cyran had M. Vincent intervene in this affair."

¹³Henri-Louis Chastaignier de La Rocheposay.

He stated that he thinks M. Vincent did so through timidity, fearing to offend many persons of quality, his [Saint-Cyran's] enemies.

(91) When asked about "the triple cabal movement" he says was formed against him:

He stated that he meant the cabal of Abbé de Prières,¹⁴ who enlisted several religious and others on his side; the second one—the one of the Bishop of Langres—with Mme. de Pont-Carré, who was living at Port-Royal; and the third one, that of the Jesuits and certain members of the Oratory who had some part in the rumors that were spread against him concerning his above-mentioned maxims. He also stated, regarding this question, that the Bishop of Langres and Abbé de Prières first had their cabals separately, but since then have joined together and, although the Jesuits acted more secretly, they did more harm to him than the others, even though he had not given them any cause for this. On the contrary, without citing the other services he rendered them, he has always refused to give to several persons the title of the grand priory dependent on the abbey of Saint-Cyran, because the Jesuits had the use of it for about twenty years.

(92) He was asked whether or not it is true that M. Vincent went to him to talk about those maxims and practices contrary to the Church that are mentioned above, given the fact that, in the letter in question, he complained to M. Vincent that he had taken advantage of the movement formed against him and had joined the others to crush him, adding that to the excesses of the others, and that he undertook to come to tell him in his own house what none of the others had dared to say. And when he was again challenged to tell us if that is not what is meant by those maxims and practices:

He stated that it seems that way, but it is something else, and he means that M. Vincent told him the same things, and that is why he subscribes to nothing else, other than that he learned them from the rumor about the cabal and those who were carrying on that persecution against him.

¹⁴Jean Jouhaud.

(94) When questioned about the identity of "that excellent Bishop of the house" about whom he says he wrote to M. Vincent:

He stated that it was the Archbishop of Poitiers, and that he wrote the said letter at Dissay, his country house, which is three leagues from Poitiers.

(95) When asked why the letter is dated from Paris:

He said that this was a mistake and that he wrote it in Dissay.

(96) When asked why the letter was not sealed nor seems to have been sealed:

He stated that it was enclosed in an envelope.

(97) When asked by whom he had the letter delivered to M. Vincent:

He stated that he sent it in care of Mother Anne de Lage, Superior of the Visitation Monastery of Poitiers, to have her deliver it to M. Vincent, whom she knows very well because he is Visitor of the Paris house.

(98) When asked what he meant by the "generous amends" he says were "made to him by Mme. de Longueville¹⁵ one month before her death, before a famous person who governed many others" and who he says was "not unknown" to M. Vincent:

He stated that for a long time Mme. de Longueville felt offended by him because Mlle. de Chamesson, who was a close friend of hers, had left the Blessed Sacrament house, and she, along with the Bishop of Langres, believed that Saint-Cyran was responsible for this departure. This made it easy for her to believe the unfavorable reports the Bishop of Langres gave her about Saint-Cyran's teaching, and she went to inform M. Desclaux¹⁶ at the home of M. de Laubardemont that there was great disorder in the Blessed Sacrament house, caused by Saint-Cyran, who left the nuns six months without hearing their confession or allowing them to confess to others. M. Desclaux replied that he himself had heard their confessions almost every week. The Lady told this to M. Desclaux so he would inform His Eminence about it, and Saint-Cyran says that he went to

¹⁵Louise de Bourbon (cf. I, 285, n. 4).

¹⁶Pierre Desclaux, confessor of Cardinal Richelieu and brother of Jacques Desclaux, Bishop of Dax.

hear the nuns' confession every week. Shortly before her death, Mme. de Longueville told the Abbess of Maubuisson¹⁷ that many false rumors had been spread about Saint-Cyran, but she acknowledged that they were not true.

(99) When asked whether or not a long time had ever passed without his hearing or having someone else hear the confessions of the nuns at the Blessed Sacrament as well as those at Port-Royal:

He said "No," and that he heard their confessions weekly; as for those who wanted to make a general review of their whole life and to spend a time of penance in order to make greater satisfaction to God, he was very careful to see them several times a week, within the period of the time limit for absolution, which is mentioned above, in order to see what progress they were making or how they were using that time.

(101) When asked how long at the most he put off absolution:

He stated, as before, that he was always ready to give absolution, and he recalled that certain nuns, like Sister Marie-Angélique and others, sometimes went three or four months without receiving it and without receiving Holy Communion, although he made many journeys to urge them to do so.

(103) When questioned about those "opinions," which he said in the letter should "be examined and authorized with the approval of the Prelates who are always around M. Vincent, whenever he chooses to speak to them about them at leisure":

He stated that he had spoken a little rashly because he claims to have no other opinions than those found in the teachings of the Apostles and their successors, and that he said previously to M. Vincent that he should recognize this by the witness of his own eyes, with no need to use artificial proofs because those opinions or truths are all contained in the official texts of the Church; namely, Scripture, the Church Fathers, and the Councils.

(104) When asked if some of his opinions are different from the opinions commonly accepted in the Church:

He said "No."

¹⁷Mère Marie-Angélique Arnauld.

(105) When asked if he believed that, among the opinions and practices commonly accepted now in the Church, there were some that may not conform to Scripture, the holy Councils, or the holy Fathers, with the result that those who follow them incur the reproach stated above; namely, that they have *pondus et pondus*:¹⁸

He said “No,” and that there were two sorts of opinions and practices: some that the Church tolerates and others that it approves; and, having said this, that he tolerated everything it tolerates and approved everything it approves.

(106) When asked why, if those opinions are no different from the ones commonly held, he wrote to M. Vincent to have all his opinions examined and authorized by the approval of the Prelates, whenever he chooses to speak to them about them at leisure, and why M. Vincent went to see him to warn him about those opinions, if they were the common ones:

He stated that M. Vincent spoke to him in all innocence about those things, and more to give him some reasons for the complaint he was making to him of having abandoned him than for any ill treatment he had received from him, and that perhaps M. Vincent did indeed reproach him for his opinions, but the only thing it proved was that M. Vincent had learned them from his enemies.

(107) When asked about the “good service” he stated he had “wanted to render M. Vincent’s house,” and which M. Vincent was unwilling to accept, and even believed that not accepting what M. Saint-Cyran wanted to do for his house was rendering a good service to it:

He stated that he did not know what advice in particular and what service he might have rendered to it, but at the time he would have prayed to God and would have done nothing without consulting him, as he did for his temporal affairs.

(108) When asked why he had “not wanted for anything in the world to play any part” in the establishment of M. Vincent in the places where he is:

¹⁸*Weights and weights.* Cf. Prv 20:10. (NAB) The meaning here is probably that the opinions of some authorities lend to a discussion greater weight than others; not all sources and interpretations have the same weight of authority and/or influence.

He stated that he had said that because he wanted spiritual affairs—as are those of holy Communities, especially those of priests—to be handled in a spiritual way and without making contracts that might give rise to lawsuits, which divert the blessings of God.

(109) When asked how the establishment of M. Vincent, in the places where he is, prevents spiritual affairs from being treated in a spiritual manner:

He stated that, in order to become established in the Saint-Lazare house, M. Vincent signed several contracts, which resulted in many lawsuits.

(110) When asked why he acted “against the judgment of his conscience,” as he says in his letter, since it is never permissible to act in that way:

He stated that his conscience would never have allowed him to undertake such a lawsuit for himself, which would be the cause of such a contract, and that he thought, nevertheless, that he could do, through condescension for others, what he could never have done for himself.

And on our pointing out to him that it is never allowed to uphold or pursue a bad affair, much less to undertake one, he stated that he had done that *dispensatorie*,¹⁹ as Saint Bernard stated in a similar case; then, too, since conscience is dependent on knowledge, he would like to think that M. Vincent had good intentions, based on good authority and reasons, and Saint-Cyran wanted to show him that he was not so rigid or unaccommodating as M. Vincent sometimes thought.

(111) When asked about the things he said he had “supported in a public dispute, even to getting the person toward whom M. Vincent had the greatest commitments to change his mind, by force of reasoning and pressure”:

He stated that those things were all incidents from the lawsuit M. Vincent had for the Saint-Lazare house, and that it is toward the

¹⁹By way of exception; giving himself the benefit of the doubt.

Advocate General M. Bignon²⁰ that M. Vincent is entirely obligated for that. M. Bignon had so many objections in that business of M. Vincent that he had a very hard time winning him over with contrary reasons, which would have been of no use if M. Bignon had not found some ingenious solution to make a success of the affair.

(112) When asked about the identity of the "colleague of the Advocate General," mentioned by Saint-Cyran in his letter:

He stated that it was the Attorney General.²¹

(113) When asked about "the words that the Son of God said to those who mistreated Him," and which he stated could be said by him in answer to M. Vincent:

He stated that he did not know what made him write those words.

(114) When asked what he meant by the words "I persist in maintaining and in adoring in my heart what the succession of the apostolic doctrine, by which we destroy heretics and without which the Church could not have survived, taught me through the voice of the same universal Catholic Church for twenty-five or thirty years," and what that doctrine is and whether he means that M. Vincent did not adhere to it:

He stated that he said that only to defend himself against those who published abroad that he had private opinions, whereas he has only those that are publicly held, claiming to be (as Saint Gregory the Great says of Job), as every Bishop should be, a disciple of the universal Church, in which resides the apostolic succession, and he does not mean that M. Vincent did not believe this doctrine, but spoke to him that way for fear that the common rumors being spread about him might alter the good opinion he had of him.

He further stated that there was nothing he hated more than speaking from his personal opinion on matters of faith and of what concerns religion and Catholic devotion; that he would be very sorry to have put forth anything outside of faith and tradition; all else, regardless of any beauty and radiance of truth it may seem to have, is suspect to him; at least he refrains as far as possible from ap-

²⁰Jérôme Bignon (cf. I, 242, n. 1).

²¹Mathieu Molé (cf. VIII, 195, n. 1).

proving it and, just as often, from condemning it, out of respect for the persons who say it, to such a degree that, in the space of ten years, he put up with people speaking with him about frivolous things that were uncertain and not very solid, which he nevertheless endured in order not to offend anyone and to avoid any disputes.

(115) When asked for what “things he finds fault with in the Institute” of M. Vincent:

He said he had forgotten all but two: one, that when he asked M. Vincent to give a mission in his abbey, he learned that the Priests of the Mission spoke too freely in the pulpit—to his way of thinking—about matters referring to purity, in order to turn the country folk away from the sins that are contrary to it; the other is that people said that in confession they asked for too many details on these same matters. He also feels that those priests seemed to be satisfied that the peasants who could not go to confession on their own might tell their sins to the confessors, after having questioned them on them one by one, without being too concerned about their interior disposition, which the peasants who presented themselves for confession were most often lacking, believing that it sufficed to tell their sins, after having been questioned about them.

(116) When asked what he meant by the words “I wanted to rid you of certain practices that I have always tolerated in your teaching, when I saw how attached to them you were and even more firmly resolved to maintain them, since they were sanctioned by the advice of the important persons you consulted”:

He stated that, by the above words he meant the things mentioned in his last reply and that, if any others came to his mind, he would say them. Then he said that he recalled that M. Vincent used to take priests who were too young, lacking either the knowledge or the virtue that should be practiced for a long enough time in order to hear confessions, especially since he sent them to far off places to carry out, either alone or with a companion, the functions of the Mission.

(117) When asked to identify the “important persons” on whose advice those practices of M. Vincent were sanctioned:

He stated that he meant none other than the late M. Duval,²² Doctor of Theology and Royal Professor of Theology, from whom it was quite obvious that M. Vincent was seeking advice, because he refused the priory he offered him, saying that he was doing so on the advice of M. Duval.

(118) When asked how he could think that M. Duval had approved or recommended the above-mentioned practices, especially the one whereby the priests of M. Vincent's Congregation saw to it that the peasants tell their sins to the confessors, after they had asked them one by one, and were not sufficiently concerned about their interior disposition, and also that M. Duval had recommended or approved of M. Vincent's taking priests who were too young:

He stated that he had nothing against M. Duval, but he said things the way he thought them.

(119) When asked about "the blessed man of our time who had said of directors of souls of our era that, of ten thousand who make profession of being so, it is very difficult to choose a single one of them":

He stated that it was the Bishop of Geneva,²³ who expressed it in the following way in his book, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, "Avila, a Spanish priest, stated that we should choose one director out of a thousand; and I say out of ten thousand, for there are fewer of them than people think."

(120) When asked why, in concluding his letter he stated that he "is setting aside the position of teacher to take that of a very humble and very obedient servant" of M. Vincent:

He stated that it was said lightly and by way of a simple excuse, while accepting that M. Vincent seemed to be trying to instruct him by speaking to him as he did of the tradition of the Church and all the rest.

(121) When asked whether or not M. Vincent had called him his teacher:

He said "No."

²²André Duval (cf. IV, 322, n. 1).

²³St. Francis de Sales (cf. VIII, 39, n. 10).

(122) When asked whether or not he sent the letter unsealed to Sister Anne-Marie de Lage, Superior of the Visitation Monastery of Poitiers:

He said he did send it unsealed to the Superior.

(123) When asked about his intention in sending it open like that:

He stated that it was getting late and the mail coach was about to leave; besides, he was sure that the Superior did nothing except what he instructed her to do, and he had complete confidence in her.

(138) When asked whether he said or believed that actions performed by vow are not more perfect than those done without a vow:

He stated that actions performed by vow are more perfect than those done without a vow.

(139) When asked whether he distinguished the counsels from the precepts:

He said "Yes."

(140) When asked whether he approved the voluntary poverty vowed in religious Orders:

He said that he approved.

(141) When asked whether he still maintained the opinions mentioned above concerning absolution, attrition, vows, poverty, the counsels, and the other aforementioned things, and whether or not he ever defended the contrary or induced others to defend or approve it, if they held it:

He stated that he never had any contrary opinions, nor even the slightest temptation regarding this, and never induced others to contrary opinions, which he always disapproved in those who held them, as will attest the Fathers of Christian Doctrine,²⁴ whom he helped to become established in Paris; the Carmelite Fathers of Les Billettes; the Abbot of Saint-Nicolas in Angers (at whose request he went to Angers to establish the Reform in that abbey, where, during a meeting of several diocesan priests and religious he was the only one to consent to bringing in the Reformed Fathers); the Discalced Carmelites; the Bernardines; the Carthusians; the Benedictines, and others, to whose houses he brought some religious, most of

²⁴Priests of Christian Doctrine (Doctrinaires) Cf. VIII, 172, n. 2.

whom were fed in his house, not to mention the Sisters of Calvary, whom he saved from the violence of those who were trying to get their house in Poitiers; the Sisters of the Annunciation in Boulogne, whose Rules he drew up; and several others.

(143) When asked whether or not he said or believed that what is usually said, that in confession a penitent is *converted from attrition to contrition*, is inadmissible:

He stated that he never condemned this maxim but that, on the contrary, if attrition sufficed with absolution—as he said above that it did suffice and never said or believed the contrary—it follows as a necessary consequence that this maxim is true.

(144) When asked whether or not he put off giving absolution, as he said above, so that those who lacked contrition, might obtain it:

He said that it was not for that reason that he put off giving absolution but for the reasons he stated above, which are the same ones for which the Church did so in the past.

(145) When asked whether or not he believed that, when a penitent has confessed his faults and expressed his regret for having committed them, with a firm purpose of amendment, a confessor should believe him and give him absolution, without waiting for the penitent to have contrition:

He said “Yes, unless the penitent himself wishes to wait.”

(146) When asked whether or not he said or believed that venial sins are not sufficient matter for sacramental absolution:

He stated that he never said nor believed that.

(147) When asked whether or not he said or believed that it was unnecessary to confess the number of mortal sins or the circumstances that change the kind of sin:

He stated that the idea never entered his mind.

(175) When asked whether or not he kept the original or the rough draft of the letter he sent to M. Vincent, considering that the letter, which completely fills five large pages, has no erasures and is very well written in comparison with the way he usually writes on his own and for himself alone:

He stated that he wrote a sort of rough draft of the letter, which he expanded in the copy, and that he tore up the rough draft because it had mistakes, and that he rarely did a rough draft of his letters.

(176) We pointed out to him that, since he wished nothing else of the nun in question than to have a copy of the letter written by him, he should not have torn up the rough draft—even though it had some mistakes, as he says—but rather, in view of the fact that he was under great pressure from the mail coach from Poitiers, he should have kept it and expanded it, for he might have done that rather than have it copied completely by a nun:

He stated that he was in a hurry to go to dinner at the residence of the Archbishop of Poitiers and was pressured by the mail coach, and that is why he did not expand the rough draft. Furthermore, it is obvious that he wanted the nun to see it and to make a copy of it.

(177) When asked how it is that he just said he did not want to keep the rough draft of his letters, given the fact that he was so concerned about getting a copy of that one, even to the point of instructing the nun to make and send him a copy of it:

He stated that he had wanted a copy of the letter because he did not trust his memory very much and did not want to forget the points concerning M. Vincent. He also wanted to declare that no one in the world had seen the letter since his arrival in Paris.

(178) When asked how he could have lost it so soon, as he stated in his responses on this topic, since he was so careful to keep in mind the points that concerned M. Vincent:

He stated that he kept in mind the points concerning M. Vincent's house, and for everything else he referred to what he said previously.

(179) When asked how he could have said above that the four points for which M. Vincent went to see him at his Paris residence, and concerning which he wrote the letter to M. Vincent from Dissay, are points on which the ancient Fathers, Doctors, and Directors of that time were so much in agreement and which were accepted by each of them, considering that Sister Anne de Lage, in her letter to M. Saint-Cyran, speaks very differently of them in these words, "To be honest with you, Father, these upsets serve only to af-

firm me more in the belief that your opinions are from God, since they are so harshly persecuted by the world, or, to put it better, by certain worldly interests found in persons dedicated to God," and that even M. Saint-Cyran said in his replies yesterday that these are things that are not accepted by the Doctors and Directors of the time and which have failed to be observed since the mendicant religious became involved in administering the sacraments and shortly before that:

He stated that he could not prevent the Sister from saying and writing what she wished, especially since she had such great facility in writing. As for the mendicants—for whom, he might add, he has the greatest respect—he denies having said that they had introduced this novelty, but only that he had heard it said.

(180) When asked to identify those persons dedicated to God, who, says Sister Anne, persecuted his opinions so harshly:

He stated that it was the Bishop of Langres and Abbé de Prières.

(188) When asked whether or not he said or believed that the Jesuits do a great deal of harm to the Church and that it would be good for the welfare of the Church to get rid of them, or something similar:

He stated that he never said that; on the contrary, he often told his friends that some occasion might arise where he could be of service to the Jesuits, when they were being abandoned by those who called themselves their friends, to say nothing of the services he has already rendered to the Jesuits and for which he was thanked by Father Jacquinot the Provincial.

(189) When asked whether he did not at least say that it would be a good idea to prevent the Jesuits from teaching theology and that, if it were up to him, he would prevent them:

He stated that he did not say that, but, to be honest, he sometimes complained to his friends that the Jesuits were allowing certain books, written by someone in their Society, to be published, without being willing to vouch for them, and they deliberately did not put in them the approval it had been customary to put in books.

(190) When asked his opinion of the Council of Trent and whether he considered it a true, ecumenical Council:

He stated that he considered it a true, ecumenical Council and never had any doubt about it, and that he had expressed this and made it public in a sermon he gave in the church of the Fathers of Christian Doctrine on the feast of Saint Charles Borromeo.²⁵ In addition, he taught the catechism of the Council to three persons. . . . Besides that, he stated that he had a public document signed before a notary, which contains the profession of a religious, on condition that the religious would live with the others in the way prescribed by the Council of Trent. . . .

(191) When asked if he believed that he and all the faithful were obliged to accept all the canons of the Council as decisions and articles of faith:

He stated that he accepted the canons of faith as faith and those of discipline as discipline, without ever getting involved with distinguishing the chapters of the Council from the canons of the Council.

(193) When asked whether or not it is true that he said that the Church is not, as is usually believed, the assembly of the faithful, composed of the Holy Father, Prelates, and Pastors, and such as we see it at present; and that the Church is other than it was before the last six hundred years, or at least before the last few centuries; and that, since that time, corruption has not only crept into morals but also into several points of doctrine, so that such a body cannot be considered Church in another sense nor for another reason except that it has followed after the true Church, in the same way as a muddy, contaminated stream, occupying the place and bed of a river whose water used to be clear, fresh, and healthful, to which the name of that same river has been given, even though it is changed by the contamination put into it:

He stated that he had said nothing about all that.

(194) When asked if, by this Church, which he says should last forever and be infallible, he means the assembly of the faithful, composed of the Pope, Prelates, etc., as we have it now:

He stated that he did not mean anything else.

²⁵November 4.

(195) When asked whether or not he said that there was some corruption in the Church, not only with regard to morals but also on certain points of the doctrine of faith:

He stated that he never said that.

(196) When asked if he always held what he just said about the Council of Trent and about the Church, and never put forward or believed the contrary:

He stated that he always maintained it and never changed his opinion on it.

(199) When asked whether or not he said that God Himself is destroying the Church or allowing it to be destroyed, that the time of building has passed and that of destroying has come, often quoting on this topic the passage, *a time for building, a time for tearing down*:²⁶

He stated that he did not remember to whom he might have said that, and that, if he did say it, it was in a different sense from the one reported above.

33a. - APPOINTMENT AS A VISITOR OF THE PRINCIPAL CONVENT OF THE JACOBINS¹ IN PARIS

(January 13, 1641)

Wishing to take steps in the disputes that have arisen between the Superiors and religious of the principal convent of the Jacobins in this city of Paris, His Majesty the King and his Council have appointed and do appoint the Bishop of Meaux his Councillor in his Councils and head Chaplain of His Majesty, and M. de Verthamon, who is also a Councillor of His Majesty in his Councils and Ordinary Master of Requests of his royal household, together with M. Vincent, Superior General of the Fathers of the Mission; Father D. Maurice, Provincial of the Barnabites; Father Dom Joyeux, Prior

²⁶Cf. Eccl 3:3. (NAB)

Document 33a. - Arch. Nat., E 1684, pièce 108, printed in *Annales C. M.* (1936), p. 707. This edition uses the latter text.

¹Dominicans.

of the Carthusians; Father Julian [de] ² Hayneufve, Rector of the Jesuit Collège; and Father [Mathieu], ³ Prior of the Reformed Jacobins of St-Honoré Convent in this city of Paris; or three of the priests ⁴ of the Order in the absence of the o[th]ers, in order that the disputes may be regulated and terminated by them, and he ordains by provisional judgment whatever they will judge appropriate for the good order and discipline of the said house, notwithstanding any oppositions or appeals. Should any of these arise, His Ma[jes]ty has reserved cognizance to himself and his Council and has prohibited it to all other judges.

SEGUIER

VERTHAMON

Saint-Germain-en-Laye, January 13, 1641

34. - VISION OF THE THREE GLOBES

[1641]

We, Vincent de Paul, most unworthy Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, attest that, about twenty years ago God granted us the grace of becoming acquainted with the deceased, our most worthy Mother de Chantal, Foundress of the holy Order of the Visitation Sainte-Marie, through frequent communications with her by word and writing, which God was pleased to give me, not only at the time of the first journey she made to this city about twenty years ago but also during others she made here since that time. In all of them she honored me with her confidence by communicating to me her interior life, in which it always seemed to me that she practiced all sorts of virtue, and, in particular, that she

²The [de] is crossed out.

³The name left blank here is given in the following document (*pièce* 109).

⁴On January 28, 1641, the following order was issued by the King's Council: "The visitation of the principal convent of the Jacobins is prescribed and will be made by three of the above-mentioned commission members [the Vicar-General of the *Gallican* Congregation of the Dominicans, Father de Hayneufve, and Father Mathieu, O. P.]" (*cf. pièce* 109).

Document 34. - Archives of the Visitation, Annecy, original autograph document.

was filled with faith, although she had been tempted with contrary thoughts throughout her entire life.

She also had a confidence in God unlike any other and a sovereign love of His Divine Goodness, along with a sound, prudent, temperate spirit, steadfast to an outstanding degree. She possessed humility, mortification, obedience, and zeal for the sanctification of her holy Order and for the salvation of the souls of the poor people to a sovereign degree. In a word, I never noticed any imperfection in her, but rather the constant practice of all sorts of virtue, and, although she apparently enjoyed the peace and tranquility of mind experienced by souls who have attained such a high degree of virtue, she still suffered such great interior trials that she told and wrote me many times that her mind was so filled with all kinds of temptations and abominations that she made herself constantly refrain from examining her interior life, since she could not bear the sight of her own soul, so full of horror that it seemed to her to be the image of hell. Although she suffered in that way, she never lost her serene expression nor slackened in the fidelity God was asking of her in the practice of Christian and religious virtues, and in the extraordinary concern she had for her holy Order.

This makes me believe that she was one of the holiest souls I have ever known on this earth and that she is now happy in heaven. I have no doubt that one day God will make known her sanctity, as I hear He is already doing in several places in this kingdom in several ways, one of which was experienced by a trustworthy person,¹ who I am sure would rather die than lie.

This person told me that, on hearing of the critical illness of our deceased, he went on his knees to pray for her, and the first thought that came to his mind was to make an act of contrition for the sins she committed and usually commits. Immediately afterward, a small globe of fire appeared to him; it rose from the earth and proceeded to join another globe, larger and more radiant, in the upper region of the air; then the two became one and rose higher, and en-

¹ Saint Vincent himself (cf. II, 241, n. 3).

tered and expanded ² into another globe, infinitely larger and more brilliant than the others. He was told inwardly that the first globe was the soul of our worthy Mother; the second, that of our blessed Father; ³ and the other the Divine Essence. The soul of our worthy Mother was reunited with that of our blessed Father, and both with God, their Sovereign Principle.

In addition, he said that, while celebrating Holy Mass for our worthy Mother immediately after hearing the news of her happy death, and when he was at the second *Memento*, where the dead are prayed for, he felt that it would be well to pray for her because perhaps she was in purgatory for certain words she had said some time ago, which seemed to suggest venial sin. At the same time, he saw again the same vision, the same globes, and their union, and felt interiorly that this soul was happy and had no need of prayers. This has made such an impression on that man that, whenever he thinks of her, he sees her in that state.

What may cause doubts concerning this vision is that the person esteems the sanctity of that blessed soul so highly that he never reads her *Replies* ⁴ without weeping, believing that it is God who inspired that blessed soul with what they contain and that, consequently, this vision is a product of his imagination. What makes one think that it is a true vision, however, is that he is not prone to visions and has never had any except this one.

In witness whereof I have signed this document with my own hand and sealed it with our seal.

VINCENT DEPAUL

²Coste mistakenly read *resplendirent* [shone] for *répandirent* [expanded].

³Saint Francis de Sales.

⁴*Réponses de notre très honorée et digne Mère Jeanne Françoise Frémiot*, Paris, MDCXXXII.

**35. - REGULATIONS FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE TUESDAY
CONFERENCES**

Statement of how the Company of the clergy of Paris proposes to live, with the help of God and according to the will of the Archbishop, in order to remain in the dispositions God was pleased to give them during the retreat they made to prepare themselves for the reception of Holy Orders.

(1) The purpose of the Company of the clergy who meet every Tuesday at Saint-Lazare or at the seminary of the Congregation of the Mission¹ is to honor O[ur] L[ord] J[esus] C[hrist], His eternal priesthood, His Holy Family, and His love for those who are poor. Thus, each member must strive to conform his life to His, to procure the glory of God in the priestly state, in his family, and among the poor—even among those in the countryside—according to the duty and talents God has given them.

(2) It will be composed only of clergy promoted to Holy Orders, who will not be admitted until after sufficient examination of their conduct.

(3) Those desiring to be admitted into the said Company will make a retreat at Saint-Lazare as soon as possible and a general confession of their past lives. If they have done so in the past, they will make one only from the time of their last one.

(4) Members of the Company will go to confession at least once a week and, as far as possible, always to the same confessor.

(5) The priests will celebrate Holy Mass every day, if they can do so conveniently; the others will receive Communion every Sunday and on the principal feasts of the year. Both groups will strive to make a retreat every year.

(6) And in order to bind themselves closer to God, to our Prelate, and to the body of the Company, each will make an annual offering on Holy Thursday, by way of a firm intention, whereby each will renew the promises made to God at the time of holy Baptism, the promise of obedience made to his Prelate when taking Holy Orders,

Document 35. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, seventeenth- or eighteenth-century copy.

¹Collège des Bons Enfants.

and the firm intention that was made to die as a member of the Company and to observe its regulations.

The following is approximately how this offering may be made:

Live Jesus! Live Mary! O Savior of the World Jesus Christ, I . . . choose You today as the only model for my life and offer you the firm and irrevocable intention to live in accordance with the promises I made at my holy Baptism and upon taking Holy Orders. I further promise to observe the regulations of the Company of the clergy and to live and die in it, with the help of your holy grace, which I ask of you through the intercession of your holy Mother and of Saint Peter.

(7) They will recall that O[ur] L[ord] has bound them together with a new bond of His love and unites them very perfectly. Thus, they will cherish, visit, and console one another in their trials and illnesses, and will be present at the burial of those who die. If possible, each of the priests will say three Masses for the soul of the deceased, and the others will receive Communion one time for that intention.

(8) They will rise early and, after dressing, will make mental prayer for at least half an hour. They will say Prime, Terce, Sext, and None, then celebrate Mass or hear it at a time most convenient for them.

(9) Every morning they will read a chapter of the New Testament, on their knees and with heads uncovered. Before or after, they will make the following three acts: (1) to adore the truths contained in the reading; (2) to enter into the sentiments of these truths; (3) to resolve to practice what they teach. They will then do some reading appropriate to their situation. They will also read some spiritual book that suits their needs.

(10) Before dinner and supper they will make the particular examination of conscience on one of their principal faults or on the virtue they need the most. This examination will last for about the length of two *Misereres*. Then they will take their meal with moderation and temperance, remembering to say the usual prayers before and after.

(11) Every evening they will make the general examination of conscience and, before going to bed, will read the points of meditation for the next day.

(12) All will meet on Tuesdays at Saint-Lazare or at the above-mentioned seminary, at three o'clock from All Saints' Day until Easter, and at three-thirty from Easter until All Saints' Day, unless they have a legitimate reason preventing them from doing so, of which they will notify the prefect or some other member of the Company, or will give their excuses at the next meeting.

They will begin the conference with an invocation to the Holy Spirit, reciting the hymn *Veni Creator* with its versicle and prayer. Then they will discuss some virtue proper to the clergy, the topic having been given at the previous meeting. Each one will share humbly and simply, by word or in writing, the thoughts God has given him on the motives for practicing that virtue, its nature, and the means to practice it well. The meeting will conclude with one of the antiphons to the Blessed Virgin. All this will take place modestly, with Christian and priestly simplicity. Care will be taken in speaking to say nothing that might offend anyone, being content with disapproving of vice and encouraging one another in the practice of virtue.

(13) Every three months the officers will meet with the Director to see if all the regulations are being observed, who is failing in them, and in what they are failing. They will also discuss means of finding a remedy for these faults and how to preserve the primitive spirit of the Company and its progress in virtue. They will delegate those who are best suited for the functions for which the Company will be responsible, such as hearing the confessions of the patients at the Hôtel-Dieu, etc., giving exhortations to prisoners, or giving some missions either in the city or in the rural areas. What they decide will be read publicly at the following conference, and each is encouraged to accept it.

(14) Those who want to go to the rural areas will inform the Company of this, if time allows; otherwise, they will notify the Director or the Prefect. From time to time they will write to the Company about how they are, what they have done and endured for God,

and the outcome of their journey. They will also strive to live in such an exemplary way that they will be an edification to their neighbor. They will avoid bad companions and choose good ones, and act in such a way as to show that they are very worthy members of the Company.

(15) The Company will be attached to Saint-Lazare and will meet there every Tuesday, as stated above, led by a Director, a Prefect, and two assistants. The Superior of the priests of the Congregation of the Mission will be the permanent Director or, in his absence, a priest of the Congregation whom he will delegate for this. They will preside at the meetings, in the absence of one or the other, have a deliberative voice in it, collect the votes, and close the meeting. Nothing will be proposed, settled, or carried out without the opinion of the Director or of the person he delegates.

(16) The Prefect, as all the other officers, will be a member of the Company, and will be present at all its meetings. He will be one of the first to arrive so as to discuss with the Director any matters that will have to be proposed. He will take care to observe the regulations and to have others do the same. He will take notice of the conduct of all the clergy in the Company and remind them of their faults, visit them, and have someone go to see them when they are sick. He will also administer the sacraments, go to the funerals of those who die, and have the members of the Company do the same, all of this on the advice of the Director.

(17) The assistants will aid the Prefect by their advice and deeds, keep a watchful eye on the whole Company, inform him of the faults they have noticed, prepare those who come to seek admission into the Company, and be present at all the meetings. In the absence of the Prefect, the first assistant will take his place, and the second will do likewise in the absence of both of them.

(18) In addition, there will be a secretary, who will record in a register all the resolutions that have been taken, having previously shown them on a sheet of loose-leaf to the Director, or, in his absence, to the Prefect, in order to ensure that he has drafted correctly what has been decided. He will also write the letters from the Company.

35a. - A "CLIENT" OF MONSIEUR VINCENT

(September 18, 1642)

To the Bailiff of Sainte-Geneviève or his Lieutenant

The priest Messire Clément Deheuze came from his village two hundred leagues away with a cavalry Captain to be his chaplain. When the Captain abandoned him in this city, bereft of all conveniences, he turned to the Mission of Saint-Lazare, asking to be taken in, which was granted him by M. Vincent, Prior of Saint-Lazare, on condition that he procure a cassock to wear. For this purpose, he went to M. Enar, a priest at Saint-Nicolas du Chardonnet, to try to get one. After M. Enar kept him waiting for three weeks, he told him that, if the Principal of the Collège des Grassins returned from the country, he could use one of his, so the petitioner went to see if the principal had returned to the collège. He found something at his feet, not knowing exactly what it was, but he thinks it was a little robe that some schoolboy had left in the courtyard. The petitioner picked it up, and at that point two boys appeared, saying that he was trying to steal it. He denied it, but they still detained him, mistreated him, and had him put in your jail for no other reason. In consideration of all this, Messieurs, may it please you to order that I be released, given my wretched state, and you will do well.

DEHEUZE, *priest*

To be communicated to the *Procureur Fiscal*, done this September 18, 1642.

E. CHAUVELIN

I do not object because the petitioner has no funds.
Drawn up, etc.

J. BOURDIN

Be it done as the *Procureur Fiscal* demands, drawn up on the same day and year as indicated above.

E. CHAUVELIN

**35b. - DEPOSITION CONCERNING FRANÇOIS PERROCHEL,¹
BISHOP-ELECT OF BOULOGNE**

(July 4, 1643)

In the presence of the same Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Archbishop of Seleucia, Apostolic Nuncio (Gerolamo Grimaldi), on the same day (Saturday, July 4, 1643).²

Reverend Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese, Bachelor of Theology of the University of Toulouse, thirty-six [*sic*]³ years of age, General of the Congregation of the Mission, residing in Paris at Saint-Lazare Monastery in the faubourg Saint-Denis, convoked and sworn in as a witness at the current process of investigation, and put under oath to answer the questions the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Apostolic Nuncio⁴ believed appropriate to ask him, replied and attested as follows:

To number 1 he replied that he had known the candidate for twelve years and had contacts with him as a missionary, that he was neither a relative nor a close friend, nor envious nor antagonistic.

To number 2 he replied that he had heard that the candidate was born in Paris.

Document 35b. - Vatican Secret Archives, *Processus consistoriales*, vol. 44, fols. 256v-257r, in *Vincentiana* (1968), pp. 61-62. This edition uses the latter text.

¹Cf. VII, 41, n. 2.

²On June 9, 1643, King Louis XIV submitted to the Holy See the nomination of François Perrochel as Bishop of Boulogne (cf. Vatican Secret Archives, *Proc. consist.*, vol. 44, fol. 249). On Saturday, July 4, 1643, at the request of the Holy See, Gerolamo Grimaldi, Apostolic Nuncio to France (cf. III, 73, n. 1), questioned three witnesses: François Fouquet, Bishop of Agde; Félix Vialart, Bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne; and Vincent de Paul.

³Clearly, the recorder transposed the numbers of Saint Vincent's age (36 for 63). This document substantiates the belief that the Saint was born in 1581.

⁴Gerolamo Grimaldi.

To number 3 he replied that he knew that he was born of a legitimate marriage of upright, Catholic parents, whom he has known for many years.

To number 4 he replied that he believed the said candidate was about thirty-eight years of age.

To number 5 he replied that he knew for certain that the candidate had been a priest for ten years and had dedicated himself very successfully to the work of missions during that time.

To number 6 he replied that the candidate was very experienced in priestly functions and in retreats for those about to receive Orders. Likewise, he saw that he received the sacraments frequently, in a pious, devout, and religious manner, and was outstanding in the practice of charity toward the neighbor.

To number 7 he replied that he had always lived as a Catholic and there was, in no way, any doubt concerning his constancy in purity of faith.

To number 8 he replied that the candidate was endowed with innocence of life and good morals, and was renowned for his excellent reputation and manner of living, and that he knew this from having conversed with him personally, as stated above.

To number 9 he replied that in all circumstances he found the candidate to be a serious man, very prudent, and outstanding in the use of things.

To number 10 he replied that he knew he had been a Bachelor of Theology from the faculty of the Sorbonne for about fifteen years, and he believed without a doubt that he had the knowledge required by a Bishop for teaching others, for very often he heard the candidate debate brilliantly and preach eloquently.

To number 11 he replied that he did not think he had any care of souls, except, to a certain extent, of the religious of his Abbey of Saint-Crispin le Grand, whom he brought back to the original discipline of the Rule, although the candidate had first found it lax in that monastery.

To number 12 he replied that it had never come to his attention, nor did he believe, that the candidate had given scandal of any kind

or had any physical defect or other canonical impediment that might prevent him from being promoted to a cathedral church.

To number 13 he replied that he considered him suitable to govern well a cathedral church, in particular the one to which he was about to be promoted; therefore, he thought he was worthy to be promoted to it and affirmed that his promotion would be useful and very advantageous in the future. He added the reason that he knew he was learned, experienced, upright, and virtuous.⁵

VINCENTIUS A PAULO

35c. - CASE IN THE COUNCIL OF CONSCIENCE

(December 6, 1644)

To the King

Sire,

Anne de Muriel, Bishop of Montauban, most humbly points out to Your Majesty that, by a decree of November 3, 1639, and letters patent on the same dated September 19, 1640, confirmed by another decree, dated January 6, 1641, the late King, of glorious memory,¹ having ordained that Messire Pierre de Bertier,² Bishop of Utica and Coadjutor of the petitioner, reside in the bishopric and diocese of Montauban, assigned to him for that purpose the annual pension of 4000 livres on the revenues of the bishopric and, because the petitioner played no part in the said decrees and agrees nevertheless that the Bishop of Utica may receive an annual pension of 2000 livres on the revenues in order to be able to maintain suitably his po-

⁵Perrochel's appointment was sanctioned at the consistory of February 6, 1645. The following June 11, at Saint-Lazare, Archbishop Jean-François-Paul de Gondy, assisted by François Fouquet and Félix Vialart, consecrated him Bishop of Boulogne.

Document 35c. - Bibl. Nat., MS, f. fr. 15.720, fol. 376. The document was printed in *Annales C. M.* (1940), p. 463. This edition uses the latter text.

¹Louis XIII (1610-43).

²Cf. VIII, 257, n. 4.

sition of Coadjutor and carry out his responsibilities in the bishopric and diocese.

For these reasons, may it please Your Majesty to release the petitioner from the pension of 4000 livres stated in the decrees, and the petitioner will continue to pray to God for the health and prosperity of Your Majesty.

I, the undersigned, unworthy Superior of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, certify that the Bishop of Montauban entrusted to me last year, around the month of October, the above-mentioned request, and that I have the original, signed in his own hand, to be presented to the Council for Ecclesiastical Affairs.

In witness whereof I have written and signed this document with my own hand. *Signed:*

VINCENT DEPAUL

Paris, December 6, 1644.

Compared with the original by me, Secretary-Counselor of the King

TREMOLLIÈRES

36. - DEDICATION OF *TEN MEDITATIONS* BY LOUIS MACHON

(April 15, 1645)

To M. Vincent, General of the Priests of the Mission

Monsieur,

Here is part of the spoils I am carrying off from your house to enrich myself without impoverishing anyone. My conduct would be blameworthy and ungrateful if, after having received so many salu-

Document 36. - Bibl. Nat., Ms, f. fr. 17.109, entitled: *Dix méditations faites par le sieur Louis Machon, archidiacre de Port et chanoine de l'Église cathédrale de Toul, pendant les dix jours de sa retraite dans la maison de Saint-Lazare, au faubourg Saint-Denis-lez-Paris.*

tary consolations, I should leave quite satisfied, without expressing how obligated I am to you for them. Your virtue is held in great esteem; but all those who speak of it only stutter and will never be able to describe it until they have seen and admired it. Your fervor at the altar, your charity toward everyone, your constant modesty, your tranquility of spirit at all times, and your humility in all your actions have won me over more than all the books I have read and all the preachers I have ever heard.

Were angels to become men, they would assuredly live as you do; and if there are any saintly mortals, they are surely like you. I am not flattering you, Monsieur; I am speaking of what I have seen, and if I were not an eyewitness of the things I am setting forth, I would be the first to challenge them. God was reserving you, not to reform His Church, but to make known to His priests the grandeur of their state and the purity with which they must live it. You are wonderful at changing people without making any innovations. A retreat of ten days transforms into an example of holiness the very person who used to give scandal everywhere. Near you, vice is forsaken with greater joy and contentment than it is embraced in those places where its charms and attractions are strongest; and I think it is easier for you to make an upright man of the person willing to listen to you than it is for all the debauched of the world to keep him as their companion.

Virtue is so attractive in you that it seems to have chosen you to manifest itself to bodily eyes. When someone sees you, he can only love what makes you so worthy of respect and esteem. I would prefer to be deprived of the few possessions I have than of the fruits I have garnered during your retreat. If God does me the favor of preserving me in the innocence I think I have regained during it, you will have placed in the ranks of the most fortunate, Monsieur, your most humble and very obedient servant.

MACHON

From your house of Saint-Lazare, April 15, 1645

**36a. - TESTIMONY OF MICHEL LE TELLIER¹
TO THE COMTE D'HARCOURT²**

(July 8, 1645)

. . . . As for the terna³ you proposed for the Solsona diocese, I really wish you had chosen to defer sending it until you had seen the opinion of M. de Marca.⁴ I thought you would have conformed yours to it without becoming further involved in that affair. Your second letter, however, which mentions it, confirms your original viewpoint. When I saw in the copy of the letter M. de Marca wrote you about it, which he sent me, the weighty reasons he puts forward, and the importance of the matter, I felt happily obliged to show everything to the Queen.⁵

What I was expecting, happened; namely, that she did not approve the legal copies from that diocese, sent against the advice of M. de Marca because of a point of conscience on which Her Majesty is more scrupulous than I could express to you. In addition, she is handling the matter in such a way that she wants to place the same confidence in M. de Marca for benefices and ecclesiastical matters in Catalonia as she does for those of France in M. Vincent or one of the others of that rank who are part of her Council of Conscience. Since M. de Marca has been named to a bishopric and is capable of examining and knowing the qualities of the persons suitable for high positions in the Church, and has been responsible for that from the time he has been in the province, she feels obliged to follow his advice. In

Document 36a. - Bibl. Nat., Ms. f. fr. 4200, fol. 141. This excerpt from Le Tellier's correspondence of July 8, 1645, was published in *Annales C. M.* (1953), 118, pp. 508-09. This edition uses the latter text. A valuable, authentic testimony of the Secretary of State, it remained unknown and was lost among the papers of his correspondence until it was brought to light by Josep Sanabra, diocesan archivist of Barcelona. Le Tellier's confidential note highlights the behavior of the Queen Regent and her great respect for Monsieur Vincent, whose wisdom and disinterestedness are once again revealed to us here.

¹Michel Le Tellier (cf. V, 96, n. 6).

²Henri de Lorraine, Comte d'Harcourt (1610-66) and third Viceroy of Catalonia, distinguished himself in military and diplomatic affairs in Piedmont, Spain, and Flanders.

³The list of three names forwarded to Rome.

⁴Pierre de Marca (cf. VII, 547, n. 4).

⁵Anne of Austria (1601-66), daughter of Felipe III, King of Spain, became Queen of France in 1615 by her marriage with Louis XIII. After his death she was Regent of France (1643-61) and is usually referred to by this title.

the case of M. Vincent, she does this in such a way that, if the Cardinal⁶ had proposed to her for a benefice a person whom Father Vincent did not judge to be qualified for it, she would uphold absolutely what he decided, and neither the recommendation of His E[minence] nor of anyone else would be capable of influencing her to go against the decision of M. Vincent. So, My Lord, when you have three persons to propose for promotion to some ecclesiastical dignity, you must be content with the vote of a man on whom the Queen relies, and who has the ability and all the proper qualifications to be specially responsible for it.

Besides that, in this circumstance we must take into account the interest of Dom Josep Margarit regarding his brother. We see clearly that we could not, without great insult to him, choose someone else in his place for the Solsona diocese. He has all the suitable qualities to fill it and had been named by the King for the Lérida diocese but was deprived of it by the letter of provision⁷ sent to Rome on the nomination made by the King of Spain of the person who is Bishop of Solsona, at the expense of the one the King made. It is, therefore, quite reasonable that he be preferred to anyone else for this diocese. We also think that the reputation of the King is very much at stake in this matter. . . .

36b. - TESTIMONY OF CARDINAL MAZARIN TO THE COMTE D'HARCOURT

(July 19, 1645)

. . . As for the office of Bishop of Solsona, M. le Tellier has written to you at length about that, and he told you only the truth when he wrote that, in this matter, M. Vincent has greater influence with the Queen than I do. I would simply remark to you that a worse affront could not be made to Dom Josep Margarit than, his brother

⁶Jules Cardinal Mazarin (cf. VIII, 265, n. 2).

⁷Letter confirming an appointment to a benefice.

Document 36b. - Bibl. Nat., Baluze bequest, no. 254, fol. 206v. The letter was published in *Annales C. M.* (1954), p. 184. This edition uses the latter text.

The letter corroborates what Michel Le Tellier wrote to the Comte d'Harcourt and gives an indication of why Mazarin wanted Saint Vincent dismissed from the Council of Conscience.

having been named to the office of Bishop of Lérida and prevented from taking possession of it because it had fallen into the hands of the enemy again, Her Majesty should give to someone else the office of Bishop of Solsona, which has become vacant by the promotion of its Bishop to the Church of Lérida. I am very displeased that you are so deeply involved in that affair, and allow me to tell you that you should proceed a little more cautiously, since I myself, who see the Queen's intentions at closer range, would not have dared to do so until after it had been brought up by M. Vincent, and he had studied it as closely as he wished.

37. - DEDICATION TO SAINT VINCENT OF *HORTUS PASTORUM*¹

(October 23, 1646)

To Reverend M. Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission.

As soon as the flowers of this most outstanding Garden began to diffuse its perfume, it was sought out and coveted immediately on all sides, as is the case with the works of this same author (a most distinguished and learned man), which have been published successively. I do not know, however, the motive of certain persons in their eagerness to add them to this Garden, piling them up with no order or logical connection with it, adding to a very large Garden several other small Gardens with separate walls and divisions, which anyone desirous of seeing and enjoying its beauty first had to cross. I have destroyed those walls; I have gathered the small Gardens into one and divided it into sections, or rather, I have restored the entire work to its proper order and correct method, so that anyone, almost upon entering, can easily find what he wants without searching for it.

Document 37. - Jacques Marchant, *Hortus pastorum et concionatorum* Paris: M. Soly, 1644. In 1651 Michel Alix edited and published a tenth edition of this work, which he dedicated to Saint Vincent. The Saint did not express much enthusiasm about this (cf. III, 121, n. 6). The original is in Latin.

¹*Garden of Pastors.*

I did not spend much time looking for someone to be the guardian and patron of this Garden. I immediately thought of you as being most worthy of this guardianship and patronage, not only because of the title of this work, which is so appropriate for those giving missions, but equally suitable for shepherds of souls. Just as those who tend their flocks can easily draw from it the nourishment Christ ordered to be provided for His healthy sheep and the remedies He ordered to be applied to the sick ones, so also all those who dedicate themselves to the salvation of souls wherever they are called can draw from it all that they need. Indeed, is there anything you may desire that is lacking in it? For, nothing is missing from the doctrine regarding the principal and most necessary questions of Faith, the sacraments, virtues and vices, duties, clerical and pastoral justice, which are all explained clearly. To these are added, like a corollary, solutions to pastoral problems and catechetical teaching.

Now, this "Garden" should be entrusted to you because, by nature and will, you have been made goodness, and by practice you are thus ready for works of charity so that, if any Pastors are struggling under the weight of their office, you immediately fly in as a prompt helper; and, possibly by alternative works for bowed shoulders, you do not let them collapse. Or, if any should falter, their reason obscured by the darkness of this weary world, you joyfully and readily extend to them the torch of your wise direction.

Someone else may praise the compassion, piety, prudence, sincerity, concern, and indefatigable effort with which you serve the Church; I cannot omit speaking of your charity, which enkindles in you the fervor to seek out sheep who go astray and are lost, even though they are not yours, and whom you find, place on your shoulders, and return to their own shepherds. Thus, you seem admirable in this new way of feeding and healing the flock.

I dedicate to you this work, due to you under so many of these titles; and what I have already done previously in thought and intention, I now do again in fact. I feel certain that I will be blessed by your acceptance with your customary benevolence, encouraged by your zeal, and approved by your good judgment and attestation.

Given in Saint-Ouen, October 23, 1646.

Most sincerely yours,

MICH[EL] ALIX,
Past[or] of S[aint]-Ou[en] Ch[urch],
Diocese of Paris

38. - EXCERPTS FROM MAZARIN'S NOTEBOOKS

(1643-50)

M. Vincent wants to advance the career of Father Gondi.¹

They seek out M. Vincent and, under pretext of loyalty to the Queen, they tell him that her reputation is being ruined by her coquetry. They say that the Bishop of Beauvais² had M. . . . speak to her about coquetry.³

Father Gondi had spoken of me in a prejudicial way, as did Father Lambert⁴ and M. Vincent.⁵

Postpone the Council of Conscience for a time.⁶

That M. de Noyers⁷ comes along with great plans and, under pretext of giving H[er] M[ajesty] an account of some construction, discussed matters that could influence her to take major decisions. He claims to have under his control the whole household of H[er] M[ajesty], the Jesuits, the monasteries, the *Dévots*,⁸ and particularly M. Vincent.⁹

Document 38. - Fifteen original autograph notebooks of Mazarin, written in Italian, are still extant and conserved in the Bibl. Nat., Baluze bequest, 174. The first is from 1642, the last from 1650. Victor Cousin published them, along with commentaries, in *Journal des Savants (Des carnets autographes du cardinal Mazarin conservés à la bibliothèque impériale, 1854-56.)*.

¹Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi. Second notebook, June-July 1643, p. 39.

²Augustin Potier (cf. II, 51, n. 4).

³Second notebook, p. 62.

⁴Lambert aux Couteaux (cf. V, 167, n. 1).

⁵Third notebook, August-September 1643, p. 33. This sentence is written in Spanish.

⁶Third notebook, p. 72.

⁷François Sublet (cf. II, 150, n. 2).

⁸The *Dévots* were a group of zealous Catholics anxious for religious reform throughout France.

⁹Fourth notebook, p. 1. The fourth and fifth notebooks cover the last months of 1643 and the first months of 1644.

Father Lambert told Mme. de Brienne ¹⁰ that he had learned from a sure source that H[er] M[ajesty] could no longer put up with him. ¹¹

Mesdames de Brienne and Liancourt ¹² are launching a great campaign with H[er] M[ajesty] for piety. ¹³

M. Vincent, in the camp of Maignelay, ¹⁴ Dans, Lambert, and others, is the channel through which everything reaches H[er]M[ajesty's] ears. ¹⁵

Father Lambert, completely won over to Arnauld, ¹⁶ is a defender of Jansenius. Warn H[er] M[ajesty] not to be surprised. ¹⁷

Two different persons have come to tell me that the monasteries, friars, priests, and devout women and men have planned, under pretext of inciting the fervor of the Queen to piety, to have her spend all her time in it so as not to apply it to her business affairs and to speaking with me. For this purpose, they hope, when all is said and done, to give the final blow to Maignelay, Dans, the Prioress of Val-de-Grâce, ¹⁸ and Father Vincent. ¹⁹

All the ladies are banded together, and Maignelay often meets with Hautefort ²⁰ and Senecey. ²¹

¹⁰Louise de Béon (cf. VII, 640, n. 3).

¹¹Fourth notebook.

¹²Jeanne de Schomberg (cf. VI, 549, n. 1).

¹³Fourth notebook, p. 59.

¹⁴Claude-Marguerite de Gondi (cf. VI, 550, n. 7).

¹⁵Fourth notebook, p. 77.

¹⁶Antoine Arnauld (cf. VI, 101, n. 9).

¹⁷Fifth notebook, p. 18.

¹⁸The former Hôtel du Petit-Bourbon. Queen Anne of Austria had established the Benedictines of Bièvre there; she used to visit them often and lavished gifts on them. At her request, her son Louis XIV laid the first stone of their church on April 1, 1645. She willed them her heart and the relics from her oratory.

¹⁹Fifth notebook, p. 24.

²⁰Marie de Hautefort, daughter of Charles, Marquis de Hautefort, and Renée du Bellay, was born on February 5, 1616, married Charles, Maréchal de Schomberg, on September 24, 1646, and died on August 1, 1691. She was intelligent and virtuous but was never willing to humor Cardinal Mazarin, which brought on her disgrace in 1644. She took her disfavor bravely, and, after her marriage, she and her husband attended to their domestic affairs without fanfare or complaint, living at home that Christian life which alone can give peace of soul.

²¹Marie-Catherine de la Rochefoucauld, Baronne de Senecey (cf. VI, 550, n. 6).

39. - TRIBUTE OF MONSIEUR DE RANGOUZE

(1650)

To M. Vincent, General of the Congregation of the Mission
Monsieur,

Virtue honors birth and matches humility with greatness, submission with domination, and poverty with wealth. When a man has placed himself beyond the reach of envy through eminent perfection, there is no one who does not admire him. True holiness is respected by worldly persons. Devotion without pomp compels even irreligious persons to reverence it. In the burning desire most people have to possess wealth and greatness, the person who knows how to spurn them and turns his affections only to heavenly things must be considered extraordinary. To want to be only what God makes us, to desire only what God wants, to have no other will but God's Will, and no other purpose but God's greater glory is to find the sweetness of paradise here on earth and, in a certain sense, to make our mortal condition happy.

I do not doubt that God has many servants who are hidden from the eyes of the world to protect themselves from the impulses of vanity that it inspires. But you, Monsieur, seem to be the only person of our time endowed with the qualities and prerogatives that can exempt you from this danger. Your uprightness is not subject to change. Your goodness is constant and sure. You are at court as if you were far from it. You are humble among the elite, simple with the common people, and poor among the rich; and, what is a continual miracle in the minds of those who know you is that you please everyone, even though they come from different paths and have contrary intentions.

The late King wanted to breathe his last sigh in your bosom; the Queen, following his example, reveals to you the most honest sentiments of her soul. The Ministers of the State have perfect confi-

dence in your integrity, which can be neither compromised nor taken unaware regarding the distribution of the Church's possessions or in the choice of its Prelates.

An upright man recognizes immediately those who resemble him. To whom, then, can administration be better entrusted than to one who seeks no other reward than the pains he takes in it? You have restored to the Order of the priesthood the glory it was due, founding Communities that follow the example of the Apostles and disciples through their missions and preaching everywhere. If this is not miraculous, it is at least accomplished with great zeal and devotion, since it is as difficult to teach the science of salvation to the unlearned faithful as it is to lay down the first foundations of the Christian religion.

In this propitious situation, I would be doing harm to my work by not giving you a place among the Prelates. Choose the place you please, and believe that I am, Monsieur, your, etc.

**40. - AUTHORIZATION FOR A VISITATION NUN
TO LEAVE HER CONVENT**

(July 20, 1650)

Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission and spiritual father of the nuns of the Visitation Sainte-Marie of Paris, to our very dear and beloved daughter in Our Lord Jesus Christ, Sister Catherine-Agnès Lionne, professed nun of the Visitation Sainte-Marie Monastery in the faubourg Saint-Jacques, requested as Superior for the new establishment being made by the Visitation nuns of Amiens in the town of Abbeville.

We approve the request made by the Sisters of your Amiens monastery to have you as Superior of the new foundation in Abbeville and, with this in view, grant you the required leave of absence for this purpose. In addition, in order that the merit of holy

obedience may contribute to all you will do for the advancement of the glory of God and the good of souls, we order that you make your way there as soon as possible and live in the perfect observance of your Rules, under obedience to the Bishop of Amiens or to those who will command you on his behalf, until you are recalled either by us or by our successors, if it is thought fit to do so.

We give you our blessing, asking God to guide you and keep you under the protection of His mercy.

Given in Paris, July 20, 1650.

VINCENT DEPAUL

41. - OUTLINE OF A CONFERENCE TO THE ORDINANDS

Before Holy Orders.

- (1) Discern whether one has a priestly vocation.
- (2) Pray and have others pray to discern this vocation.
- (3) Consult one's confessor or some distinguished person for that purpose.
- (4) Once the vocation is acknowledged, embrace it with purity of intention for the glory of God and one's own salvation.
- (5) Possess a title that is neither false nor spurious.
- (6) Have the bans published one month before ordination; bring a certificate of the integrity of one's life and morals.
- (7) Present oneself for the examination with the spirit of indifference regarding either admission or exclusion.
- (8) As the time of retreat approaches, perform many acts of renunciation of the world and of the desire to give oneself to God.

During the retreat.

(1) Begin the retreat with a great desire to learn the functions and virtues proper to each Order and those that are appropriate and common to the entire priestly state.

(2) They will ask God each day to give them a docile heart in order to learn well what will be taught.

(3) They will make notes each day of the most important things they have learned.

(4) They will be faithful to using all the time needed to carry out faithfully all the exercises.

(5) They will ask the retreat director for some convenient time to reflect on and write out their general confession.

(6) They will ask his permission to perform some humbling acts, such as serving at table or sweeping the floor.

(7) When they receive Holy Orders, they will offer and consecrate themselves to God without reserve and with no exception, in the way they will have been taught.

After the retreat.

(1) Thank God for the Order they have received and the instructions they have been given for it, unlike a thousand priests who have received Holy Orders in various parts of the world without this preparation.

(2) Set out to practice well the instructions they have received.

(3) Say or attend Mass daily.

(4) Confess twice a week to the same confessor.

(5) Have a daily schedule and abide by it.

(6) Arrange matters so as to be able to preach or teach catechism every Sunday.

(7) Have a director to whom they make known their interior dispositions.

(8) Accept the responsibilities and conditions laid down by the Prelate, and be faithful to them until another duty which the Prelate chooses to assign is given.

(9) Do their utmost to participate in the conferences that will be given to maintain the devotion they have received from God during the retreat.

42. - ADVICE TO A DISTINGUISHED PERSON

On rising, I shall adore the majesty of God and thank Him for His glory, the glory He has given to His Son, to the Blessed Virgin, to the Holy Angels, to my Guardian Angel, to Saint John the Baptist, to the Apostles, to Saint Joseph, and to all the saints in paradise. I will thank them also for the graces He has given to the holy Church, and especially for those I have received from Him, particularly for having preserved me during the night. I will offer Him my thoughts, words, and actions in union with those of Jesus Christ; I will also ask Him to keep me from offending Him and to grant me the grace of carrying out faithfully whatever will be most pleasing to Him.

43. - REFLECTIONS ON THE BEAUTY OF GOD

What can compare to the beauty of God, who is the source of all the beauty and perfection of creatures? Is it not from God that the flowers, the birds, the stars, the moon, and the sun derive their luster and beauty?

Document 42. - Abelly, *op. cit.*, bk. III, chap. VIII, p. 71. Abelly extracted this passage from one of the Saint's writings in his own hand.

Document 43. - Abelly, *op. cit.*, bk. III, chap. VI, p. 51. Abelly extracted this passage from one of the Saint's writings in his own hand.

44. - REFLECTIONS ON A SPIRITUAL RETREAT

By the expression “spiritual retreat” or “spiritual exercises” we should understand a withdrawal from all business affairs and temporal pursuits to apply ourselves seriously to understanding well our interior life, examining carefully the state of our conscience, meditating, contemplating, praying, and preparing our soul in this way so as to be purified from all our sins and all our bad attachments and habits in order to be filled with the desire for virtue. We should also desire to seek and know the Will of God, and, once we know it, to submit to it, unite ourselves to it, and, in this way, to strive for, advance toward, and finally attain our own perfection.

45. - REFLECTIONS ON COMMUNITY LIFE

Anyone wishing to live in Community must be determined to live like a pilgrim on earth, to become foolish for the sake of Jesus Christ, to change his standards of behavior, to mortify all his passions, to seek God alone, to subject himself to others as the least of all, to be convinced that he has come to serve and not to rule others, to suffer and work and not to live in luxury and idleness. He must know that a person is tried in it as gold in the furnace, that he cannot persevere in it if he is unwilling to humble himself for God, and be convinced that in so doing he will have true happiness in this world and eternal life in the next.¹

Document 44. - Abelly, *op. cit.*, bk. II, chap. IV, sect. I, p. 270. Abelly extracted this passage from one of the Saint's writings in his own hand.

Document 45. - Abelly, *op. cit.*, bk. I, chap. XXXIV, p. 162. Abelly extracted this passage from one of the Saint's writings in his own hand.

¹These thoughts are from *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis (bk. I, chap. XVII), whose words Saint Vincent is interpreting here.

46. - OUTLINE OF A CONFERENCE TO THE VISITATION NUNS

[Around May 1655]

The conference is divided into three points: in the first, M. Vincent indicates the reasons why it is important to choose a good nun; in the second point, he gives the qualities that must be found in a nun for her to be able to be elected Superior and to carry out this responsibility well; and in the third, he gives the means to make a good choice.

First point. —The first reason is that what the heart and soul are to the body, the Superior is to the community. Therefore, as the soul is found in all parts of the body and gives them their movement and action, in like manner the Superior must be in all parts of the community, by vigilance on her part, by respect and affection on the part of the Sisters, and by action through the observance of community practices. In the second place, what the pilot is to the ship and to those who navigate it, the Superior is to her community; and what the general of the army is to his troops, the Superior is to her community, etc.

The second reason is that it is an article of faith that one must be called by God to the direction of souls and that the Son of God was unwilling to perform His work until He was called to it. The Council of Trent, etc.

Second point. —The qualities required of a nun in order to be a good Superior are: (1) that she have common sense; (2) be a good Christian; (3) be a good nun; (4) be a good Officer; (5) be zealous for the glory of God and the sanctification of her community; (6) be vigilant; (7) be effective; and be the first everywhere.

The means. —The first means is prayer; (2) steadfast determination to vote for the best person; (3) renounce aversion, etc.; (4) renounce personal inclination; (5) vote for the one for whom she would wish to have voted at the hour of death.

**47. - THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD
AND THAT OF JESUS CHRIST**

From Pope Saint Gregory's work on morality, bk. 10, chap. 16, commenting on Job, chap. 12.

The wisdom of this world consists in hiding one's feelings through deviousness, concealing true meaning in words; representing falsehood as truth and truth as falsehood.¹

It is learned from the time one is a child, and one is instructed in it from one's youth.

Those who have this spirit are proud of it and do not care about others.

This spirit is disguised under the name of politeness.

They aspire to the highest positions and assume them with joy.

If they have received some provocation, they take vengeance openly when they have the power, and do so on the sly when they do not; lastly, they cover up the insults when they have no means of taking vengeance.

The Christian spirit, on the contrary, consists in not pretending anything, but rather in being very sincere, making one's words and works correspond to one's thoughts, loving the truth, avoiding lies, doing good without expecting any reward, preferring to endure evil than to do it, considering it a blessing to be despised and hated for having done good.

Indeed, does anything seem more foolish to the worldly than to express one's true feelings in words; never to make false pretences by tricky deviousness; never to render insults for injuries; to pray for our detractors; to seek poverty; to relinquish possessions; not to resist if we are being despoiled; to offer the other cheek to the one who strikes us?²

Document 47. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original autograph document. It translates or reproduces parts of two Lessons from the Roman Breviary (Common of Confessors non-Pontiffs, alternative Lessons in the Second Nocturn, Lessons IV and V), taken from bk. 10, chap. 16, on *Moral Reflections on Job* (Chap. XII) by Pope Saint Gregory the Great (590-604).

¹These first two paragraphs are written in Latin.

²This passage is written in Latin.

48. - A STUDY ON GRACE

(1) The importance of being well instructed on the difference of opinion in the Church today regarding grace.

(2) In what this difference of opinion consists, which is the ancient opinion of the Church that God gives all persons—both faithful and unbelievers—sufficient grace to be saved, and that a person may accept or refuse this grace. Those who hold the new opinions maintain that sufficient grace is not given to all persons but that there is only efficacious grace, given to a few, and that those to whom it is given cannot resist it.

(3) The reasons why we believe, as the Church has done until now, that sufficient grace is given to all and that one can resist it.

(4) The reasons given by opponents.

(5) The means of being strengthened and of persevering in the ancient belief of the Church.

I. —What motives do we have for improving our knowledge regarding the subject proposed?

(1) That we are in danger of being misled, in the case of the new opinions, and of following error instead of truth; in this sense the Holy Spirit states that the person who ignores it shall be ignored and shall die in his ignorance.¹ That is why many people, for want of having the opinions of Luther and Calvin explained clearly to them in the first place, have fallen into error.

(2) That what is at stake is our salvation, which consists in believing all that the Church teaches, and that, in a certain sense, those who are unwilling to improve their knowledge of matters regarding their salvation are headed for their own damnation.

(3) That, in the case of division in religion, there is wisdom in being enlightened, and rashness and great danger in acting otherwise.

Document 48. - Original autograph document, which in 1913 belonged to M. Lacaille (50 boulevard Malesherbes, Paris), at whose office Coste made a copy. The document was recovered in 1982 and was photocopied; it disappeared from the Berceau around 1987. The expansion of the fifth part is missing. Everything written in italics is in Latin in the original.

¹Cf. 1 Cor 14:38. (NAB)

In what does this difference of opinion consist?

We have stated it: to know that God gives people—I mean all people, the faithful as well as unbelievers—the help to be saved, which we call grace, and that people can fail to take advantage of this grace and reject it. Also, that the proponents of the new opinions hold the contrary: that there is no sufficient grace, given to everyone, but rather efficacious grace, given only to a few, and that those to whom it is given can fail to take advantage of it by refusing it.

To better understand this question, note that about twelve hundred years ago Pelagius² maintained that man could perform the works necessary for salvation through his own poor human [means], with no other help from God than sermons, reading good books, and similar external means that lead us to God.

That Saint Augustine,³ a contemporary of Pelagius, was opposed to these opinions of his and maintained that man, on his own strength, aided by the external means of preaching, etc., could not do the things required for salvation, and that actual and supernatural grace from God through Jesus Christ was necessary, causing us to embrace the good necessary for salvation and to avoid evil. Saint Augustine was followed in this by the Sovereign Pontiffs and the Church, with the exception of a few persons who followed the opinion of Pelagius.

From this dispute between Saint Augustine and Pelagius, others derived from it have arisen from time [to time], like certain malignant illnesses which are never cured, so that every now and then they spawn others, such as a certain disease we dare not mention, and quartan fever in some.

That of the Semipelagians appeared soon after the death of Saint Augustine. They promulgated an intermediary opinion, which was in agreement with Saint Augustine, in that it held that men could do nothing without the grace of God, and with Pelagius, in that they

²An heresiarch who lived from about 354 to at least 418. His doctrine was condemned by the Council of Ephesus in 431.

³Bishop of Hippo (354-430).

said that men had within them a principle of good works, which left to God the possibility of giving them these graces. That is why they were called Semipelagians and were condemned by the Church.⁴

Four hundred years later, this error gave rise to another, which was that Our Lord had not died for everyone. So, when the Bishop of Troyes⁵ was unable to be present for the election of a Bishop for Paris, he sent his proxy to cast his vote for a person he named, provided he believed that Our Lord Jesus Christ had not died for all, and not otherwise. And that opinion—that Our Lord had not died for all—was incontestably to exclude the sufficient grace given to all.⁶

In the year 1560, Baius,⁷ a Doctor and Dean of Louvain, put forward many opinions, among which were some against freedom of indifference, saying that willingness, although necessary, was in keeping with the freedom that is always understood as freedom of indifference. He did this to show that a person cannot resist grace. These opinions were condemned by Pius V,⁸ and when they cropped up again during the pontificate of Gregory XIII,⁹ he condemned those same opinions once more.

They began to reappear in 1640¹⁰ [with] Jansenius, Bishop of Ypres, and were promoted by Abbé de Saint-Cyran and many persons who espoused them. But, as what remains of the bad disease we mentioned is rather another—often a different kind—in the same way, the errors of Jansenius are not the ones that were circulating in the time of Saint Augustine but rather are different ones.

The opinions of Pelagius went against the need of interior grace for salvation; those of these times are that God does not give graces

⁴At the Second Council of Orange (529).

⁵Prudentius of Troyes was born in Spain and died Bishop of Troyes in 861. He limited God's salvific Will to believers in Christ. The episode mentioned here by Saint Vincent took place in 858.

⁶Text of the original: "And that opinion was contradicted that Our Lord had not died for all, to exclude the. . . ."

⁷Baius (Michel de Bay) was born in Belgium in 1513 and died in Louvain on September 19, 1589.

⁸Pope Saint Pius V (1566-72).

⁹Pope Gregory XIII (1572-85).

¹⁰The year the *Augustinus* was published.

to all to be saved, and that, of necessity, the graces God gives to some take effect in such a way that a person cannot resist them.

In accordance with that, we have to prove that God gives sufficient graces to all persons in order to be saved and that, in giving us these graces, He does not force our free will but leaves it the freedom to make good use of these graces or to abuse them.

The proof of what I am setting forth is drawn from Sacred Scripture, the Councils, the Fathers, and reason.

Here are the proofs which reveal that God's goodness is so great that it offers everyone the means to be saved: Saint Paul says of God that *He wills that all persons be saved*.¹¹ And the argument is given that, if He does will that all persons be saved, He must, of necessity, give all persons some means to be saved, knowing well that they cannot do so on their own strength, since, as He inspired Saint Paul to say, *We cannot say Abba, Father, except through the Holy Spirit*.¹² Furthermore, the same Scripture says of God that *He wants no one to perish*.¹³ Assuming this to be the case, then, He must give them help to prevent them from doing so.

In the third place, we see that God has given a universal means for saving the whole world, namely, the passion and death of Our Lord: *If one man died for all*.¹⁴ And elsewhere, Saint John says: *He died as an offering for our sins, and not for our sins only, but for those of the whole world*.¹⁵

And the Church, to show that it understands it in this way, demonstrates it by the words of the offering of the chalice: *We offer you, O Lord, the chalice of salvation, praying earnestly for your mercy so that it may ascend in the sight of your Divine Majesty for our salvation and that of the whole world*.¹⁶

¹¹Cf. 1 Tim 2:4. (NAB)

¹²Cf. Rom 8:15-16. (NAB)

¹³Cf. 2 Pt 3:9. (NAB)

¹⁴Cf. 2 Cor 5:14. (NAB)

¹⁵Cf. 1 Jn 2:2. (NAB)

¹⁶Prayer said at the Offertory of the Mass before the liturgical revisions of Vatican II.

The Council of Orange states: *All those baptized with the prevenient and cooperative grace of Christ can and should do what is necessary for salvation.*

Saint Augustine uses these words: *He enlightens everyone coming into this world.* How is it, then, that all are not enlightened? He replies, *It is not because they lack the light, but because they fail to be enlightened.*

And to the same person, asking how it is that, if God always gives His grace and good will to all persons, why are not all saved, he replies: *Because they are unwilling*; note that He gives this grace to all.

And, speaking of grace, his disciple Saint Prosper¹⁷ says that *this assistance is offered to all.* And Paul Orosius¹⁸ states that he firmly believes that grace is given to all persons to be saved: *It is given not only to the faithful but to all people as well; not only to all in general, but to each individual; and not only for one day but every day, at all times, hours, moments—even the most minute fractions of time.* Then he concludes: *No one lacks help.*

Indeed, I do not know how God, being Infinite Goodness, who [opens wide] His arms every day to embrace sinners as it is said, *Each day I have held out my hands to an unbelieving and recalcitrant people, etc.*,¹⁹ could have the heart to refuse grace to all those who would ask Him for it, and would allow Himself to be surpassed by the kindness of David, who took the trouble to seek out a member of his household who was his enemy, to grant him clemency.

Add to this the fact that, if God refused His grace to some, there would be no reason for him to order them to observe the Commandments of God, which He knows they cannot observe without His

¹⁷Saint Prosper of Aquitaine, a lay theologian born around 390 and thought to have died in Rome about 465. He had an excellent classical education and was well read in theology; his writings, both in verse and in prose, are mainly concerned with the controversy about grace and free will in defense of Saint Augustine's doctrine. After 440, Saint Prosper was associated with Pope Saint Leo I and aided this Doctor of the Church with his correspondence and theological writings.

¹⁸Paul Orosius (c. 390-c. 418), a historian associated with Saint Augustine. At the latter's request, as a supplement to his *City of God*, he wrote a history of the world, the first to be produced by a Christian writer.

¹⁹Cf. Is 65:2. (NAB)

help; and it would be accusing God of injustice if He condemned them for that—which is unlikely. It would follow that there would be no hell for people.

In line with that, it follows that God is so good that, just as it is not the sun's fault that everyone cannot see, but it is because they lack sight or close the window or their eyes, in the same way God sends graces to everyone, and it does not depend on God that everyone be saved.

The blessed Bishop of Geneva demonstrates this by a comparison of some pilgrims, etc. who, having fallen asleep, are all awakened [by the sun]. Some get up and walk on, arriving safely at the place where they are going; the others go back to sleep and get up late. Becoming lost in the dark, they are captured and mistreated by thieves. Now, all of them were awakened, but it is not the fault of the sun that all did not get up and arrive safely at the place where they were heading.²⁰

Here are the objections:

It is said that Saint Augustine stated that *God does not will that all be saved*. What he said is true for those who were unwilling to observe His Commandments but not for those who observed them. God wants all persons to be saved and gives everyone the means for that. If, however, they do not use them, it is not God's fault, but theirs.

A further objection:

We have said that the second difficulty lies with the opinion held by those adherents of the new opinions; namely, that God's grace works in such a way that our free will cannot resist it.

Here are the reasons against that:

The Council of Trent states the contrary at Session 6 (*On Justification*) and fulminates anathema against those who believe that our wills cannot resist the inspiration of grace,²¹ using as a basis Holy Scripture, which states *How long will you resist the Holy Spirit? I called you and you refused. Jerusalem! Jerusalem! how often have*

²⁰Saint Francis de Sales, in his *Treatise on the Love of God* (cf. bk. IV, chap. 5).

²¹Canon IV.

*I wished to gather your children, as the hen gathers her young, and you refused,*²² and Saint Augustine, who says (as is stated above) that people do not observe the Commandments of God *because they do not want to do so*. And the same is said of Esau: *Esau did not want to run and did not do so, but if he had been willing, he would have run and would have attained paradise, except that he spurned this call and became a reprobate*. Again, speaking of Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar, Saint Augustine says: "Both were Kings, both were persecutors of God, and God afflicted them [both] through His infinite clemency." *One of them repented; the other, by his own free will, fought against the truth of the most merciful God*.

To express how that happens, the blessed Bishop of Geneva uses the comparison of the apodes²³ who are able to lift themselves up to fly only when the wind is favorable and they extend their wings. So, if they like the place where they are, they can leave their wings unextended, and the wind will blow in vain because it will not lift them up if they do not wish it and refuse to spread their wings. This is also seen in the comparison with the pilgrims cited above, and in that of our eyes, which can refuse the rays of the sun, and of ships at sea, which can refuse the action of the wind by not spreading their sails.

These are some of the arguments why God has left us the freedom to refuse His grace.

Otherwise, man would have done everything through necessity, and consequently would have had no merit. What merit does a convict have in greeting the General of the Galleys? A free gentleman from the province will do him greater honor by greeting him than ten thousand convicts will.

In line with all that, it would follow that a person has no merit for the good he does or for the evil he avoids and, consequently, no reward or paradise; and since there would be no hell either, as has been said, we work in vain, do good, and avoid evil with no hope of reward or fear of punishment.

²²Cf. Mt 23:37. (NAB)

²³A word meaning "footless": reference to the rudimentary feet of the sea swallow (Saint Francis de Sales, *op. cit.*, bk. II, chap. 9, n. 10).

In a word, it follows, as Saint Thomas says in the book *On the Law of the Gospel*, that our religion means nothing and is pure folly, and perhaps that is why one of the authors of those fine opinions,²⁴ as soon as he became involved in them, gave up fasting and abstinence and celebrating Holy Mass, which he formerly celebrated every day, and why his other self²⁵ never performed any external act of virtue in the eyes of those who associated with him.

Here are their objections:

According to Saint Augustine, *God directs the soul inflexibly, invincibly, and with no hope of our avoiding His action*; therefore, our free will cannot defend itself from this action of God.

—I reply that, *as far as grace is concerned*, it acts in that way, but, *as far as the will is concerned*, it is not the same, since the sun *orders the faculty of sight invincibly, etc.*, but operates that way in vain when man, by closing his eyes, hinders the effect of the sun's brilliance.

Saint Augustine states that God does not give us at present the grace of willing and not willing, as he once did to Adam, because of his sin and the loss of the virtue of free will.

—But I reply that, even though we may not have this grace inherent in us, for the reason put forward, God gives it to us²⁶ when we need it. For, otherwise, how could the Council of Trent state that we contribute to the action of grace and may refuse it if we wish, and fulminates anathema against those who say the contrary?

Saint Augustine bases freedom on the delight in doing good and avoiding evil, but not in indifference.

—I reply that the above-mentioned authorities of Esau and the two Kings that he cites show that they can do good and avoid evil.

They say that the necessary willingness is²⁷ the freedom that is always understood as indifference.

²⁴Probably Saint-Cyran.

²⁵Might Saint Vincent have had in mind here Antoine Arnauld or Saint-Cyran's nephew Barcos?

²⁶Saint Vincent originally wrote *O[ur] Lord gives it to all*, but crossed it out and wrote *God gives it to us*.

²⁷Text of the original: *They say that the willingness necessary and. . .*

—I reply that this opinion is condemned, as is that other one which tells us that this sort of freedom is not found in Scripture. *He that could have transgressed, and did not transgress: and could do evil things and has not done them.*²⁸ *I have set before you fire and water: stretch forth your hand to which one you will.*²⁹

Saint Augustine is absolutely opposed to the ancient opinions of the Church regarding grace.

—It may seem so to those on that side, but the passages cited above demonstrate the contrary.

*Who confers any distinction on you?*³⁰ That is another objection.

—I reply *not I, but the grace of God with me.*³¹

Justification is the work of God and not of men: *It is not a question of one who wills, etc.*³²

—I reply that this is true of our own strength, but not with the grace of God, by which we participate in our own justification.

The modern-day opinion is more humble, and the old one savors of glory.

—I reply what Saint Paul states: *Let the one who glories, glory in the Lord,*³³ and that we can do nothing whatsoever without grace; thus, all the glory from anything is due to Him, as to the master writer who holds and guides the hand of the child to teach him how to write.

²⁸Cf. Eccl 31:10. (D-RB)

²⁹Cf. Eccl 15:17. (D-RB)

³⁰Cf. 1 Cor 4:7. (D-RB)

³¹Cf. 1 Cor 15:10 (D-RB)

³²Cf. Rom 9:16. (D-RB)

³³Cf. 1 Cor 1:31. (D-RB)

**48a. - SAINT VINCENT'S PARTICIPATION
IN HOLY THURSDAY LITURGY**

In the year 1652, while on retreat at Saint-Lazare during Holy Week to prepare for the priesthood he had the honor of receiving the following Saturday, he [Masson] was chosen to serve as deacon on Holy Thursday at the Mass celebrated by the Servant of God Vincent de Paul. When the Mass had ended, the Servant of God performed the ceremony of the Last Supper, washing the feet of twelve poor persons. He did this so devoutly that the witness and the subdeacon were obliged to hold him up by the arms and to lift him from the feet of the poor persons before whom he remained prostrate. The witness noted with what remarkable devotion the Servant of God, after having washed the feet of each poor man, embraced them and kissed them with as much tenderness and respect as if he had kissed relics.

**49. - INSTRUCTION TO THE RESIDENTS
OF THE NOM-DE-JÉSUS¹**

[Summer 1653]²

Sunday . . . , M. Vincent went to the Nom-de-Jésus to begin to teach Christian doctrine to the poor workers of the family of Jesus. When he arrived, he said to them: "We will say the Rosary now, and then we will have an instruction." After praying the Rosary, he began by saying:

Document 48a. - *Annales C. M.* 103 (1938), p. 476. The Archives of the Mission, Paris, possess this deposition of Paul Masson at the Parisian Diocesan Information Process for the canonization of Vincent de Paul (Testimony 158). It was given on June 23, 1705, at the Louyé Priory of the Order of Grandmont, Chartres diocese, where he had been Pastor in Val-Saint-Germain.

Born in Pons, Amiens diocese, Masson was a Doctor of Arts of the University of Paris. At the time of his deposition he was eighty years old.

Document 49. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, 140 rue du Bac, Paris, original document, in the handwriting of one of the Sisters.

¹The Nom-de-Jésus was a hospice for the elderly poor of Paris (cf. VIII, 73, n. 6).

²This instruction is undated, but the content indicates that it was given during the summer of the same year as the foundation of the Nom-de-Jésus.

“Children, I think we will be doing something pleasing to God by discussing Christian doctrine, and for that purpose I will question you on the principal mysteries of faith and on the Sign of the Cross. You should not be surprised, however, if you do not know how to do this very well. Oh, no, children! But you must do your best to learn well; the reason for this is that your founder, your foster father,³ has placed you here with this in view and is concerned especially about the salvation of your souls. So then, that is the reason obliging you to do all you can to learn well what you will be taught.

“That is the intention of your founder, and here is what he said to me: ‘Monsieur, I am not concerned about the body, but I am concerned about the soul. It is not only to withdraw them from their wretchedness that I am giving my money to maintain them; but my intention is that they be instructed and that someone will teach them the things necessary for their salvation’.

“Tell me, children, is it not beautiful to say that God gave those thoughts to a man—and a man of high society? Do we not have to acknowledge how good God is to give His servants such sentiments for you?

“That, then, is the first reason you have to learn well. Another is that there is no salvation otherwise. So, if you want to be saved, you are obliged to learn the principal mysteries of faith. You can see that this is a powerful motive for learning well and appreciate the great benefit that God, in His goodness, has given you in putting you in a place where you have so many means to do this—and will have even more, I hope.

“So, children, you must do all you can to retain carefully the instructions that will be given you, convinced that you are obliged to do so as Christians and children of God. The Angelic Doctor Saint Thomas says that no one can be saved without knowing and believing that there is one God in three Persons. Theologians give the reason for this: because these are means necessary for salvation. Now, the person who neglects the means that help him to be saved cannot be saved.

³The wealthy Parisian who had founded the hospice.

"Those, then, are the two main reasons you have to learn well. I am going to begin by asking you some questions, but even if you may not know how to answer very well, do not let that worry you. I will ask you if you know how to make the Sign of the Cross correctly; and even if you do not know how, that should not worry you. You are not the only ones. How many persons there are at the Court—perhaps even magistrates—who do not know how to make it! That should encourage you to overcome the shame we usually feel when we do not know how to reply to what we are asked. It is pride that causes us this shame because we always want to appear to be something. You should act like those good country people who show such a strong desire to learn that they come to us and say, 'Monsieur, I am afraid I do not know what I should know. I have had no instruction. Please question me to see what I know.' See, children, how those good people are not ashamed to appear ignorant. That is the way to act."

After M. Vincent had said all this, he began by questioning those good people, one after the other, on the Sign of the Holy Cross, showing them how to make it, and making it himself several times to teach as much by example as by word. He then said:

"The Sign of the Cross, which is the sign of Christians, has always been commonly used from the time of the Apostles and disciples of Our Lord, who exchanged this sign in order to recognize one another. Consequently, when two Christians would meet somewhere, they would make the Sign of the Cross so they would know whether they were disciples of Our Lord, and by this sign would recognize one another without saying a word because they dared not reveal themselves openly. Since, however, they had exchanged this sign in order to recognize one another, no one noticed it except themselves, and they could see immediately that they were Christians. Then they would embrace, treat one another in a friendly way, and say some consoling words to one another. That is how the Christians of the early Church behaved."

After M. Vincent had taught them how to make the Sign of the Cross correctly, he asked whether they knew about the mystery of

the Holy Trinity, questioned all of them one after the other, and, in order to help them to understand better, said to them:

“Children, I am going to give you a comparison that Saint Augustine taught; it is about the sun. Just as there are three elements in the sun but these three elements do not make three suns, so in the Holy Trinity there are three Persons, but all three make only one God. So then, there are three elements in the sun; namely, the substance of the sun, light, and heat.

“The substance of the sun is that beautiful star we see in the heavens. The light is what shines down on us and on all those on earth, dispelling the darkness of the night and, in a word, what delights everyone; for, if we were in darkness, what joy would we have? The third element in the sun is heat, a great heat proceeding from the substance of the sun and from the light. It is this great heat that ripens fruits and other things on the earth. When you experience stifling heat, as it was when we came in here, it is from the sun that it comes.

“From this comparison you see how there is only one God and three Persons in God who are inseparable from one another, just as the sun is inseparable from the light, and the light from the heat. These three elements are never apart from one another; you know this from experience. Why will it not be so hot this evening as it is right now? Because the sun will have gone down; and, as the heat is inseparable from the sun, we will not feel it any more because the sun will have gone down.”

He began to question the men; then, turning to a little boy, he asked:

“Who is God, my child?”

“*Monsieur, God is the Creator of heaven and earth and the Lord of all things.*”

“Fine! he has answered very well. God is the Creator of heaven and earth. What do you mean by the words ‘Creator of heaven and earth?’”

“*I mean the one who has made everything.*”

“Yes, when we say: ‘Creator of heaven and earth,’ that means the one who has made everything. Remember that carefully, chil-

dren. When you hear it said, you will recall that Creator means the same as the one who made everything. But you may say: 'How is that? Has God made everything that is on this earth?' Yes, God has made everything. 'But, Monsieur, has God made the many different creatures that we see?' He made all that and did so for the service of mankind—even the tiniest creature that God has made, even a mite, God has created that. 'But, Monsieur, is it possible that God created all that?' Yes, it is true that he created the mite that scurries between the flesh and the skin, and those little ants you see running around; God created all that.

"When the men who went to instruct those poor uncivilized people who did not know what God is, taught them that there was one God in three Persons, they could not understand or respond to that. When they were asked: 'What is God?' they did not know what to say nor to understand, until they were told that God is the Creator of heaven and earth, the one who has made everything. Now when they are asked what God is, they say: 'The one who has made everything.' So you see, children, how fortunate you are to have been born in a Christian country, where we know God to the extent that the dimness of our intellect allows.

"My child, how many gods are there?"

"There is only one, Father."

"And how many Persons are there in God?"

"There are three, but all three form only one God."

"Could you give me an example to make that clear?"

"Monsieur, I will use a candle for that because there are three elements in it: the wax, the wick, and the flame, but all three of them make only one candle."

"God bless you, son! The boy gives the example of a candle in which there are three elements that form only one lighted candle. Still, even though there are three Persons in the Holy Trinity, there are not three gods, but only one. Remember that; there are not three gods, not six, not ten or twenty, as the pagans hold—because they believe that there are many gods—no, there is only one God in three Persons."

Then, turning to a woman, he asked her: "What is God?"

"God is the Creator of heaven and earth."

“What does ‘Creator’ mean? What does it mean to create something?”

“It means to make something out of nothing.”

“Oh, you are very intelligent, my friend! You are trying to say that to create means to make something out of nothing, and that it belongs to God alone to make something without using any matter. People can certainly make some piece of work, but it is understood that this means to make one thing from another. To build this house, for example is to make something; but, because this requires stones, cement, and other materials, it is not called creating, but making, something. And here is the difference between creating and making: to make something, material is required, but to create something from nothing the only thing required is the omnipotence of God, who can make whatever He pleases.

“These are the reasons, children, that oblige you to learn well the intention of your founder; otherwise, there is no salvation. See whether that does not merit your working at it to acknowledge the graces God has given you in having provided you with the things necessary for both body and soul. What more could you wish for? You are given your food—not like what is given to magistrates, but enough to meet your needs. How many poor persons there are in Paris and elsewhere who do not have the good fortune you have! How many poor nobles who would consider themselves very lucky if they had the food you had! How many poor farmers there are who work from morning until night, who are not so well fed as you are! All that should oblige you to do as much manual labor as you can, according to your strength, far from thinking: ‘I do not have to take the trouble to do anything, since I am sure that I will lack nothing.’ Ah, children! Be very careful to avoid that; say rather that we have to work for the love of God, since He Himself gives us the example of this by working constantly for us.

“This, then, is the fruit you should gather from this instruction: to love work, after the example of Our Lord, who worked so hard for us, to learn the things necessary for salvation, and to do it soon for fear that death may surprise you. There are many persons who want to learn, but it is when they are on their deathbed, and then they say:

‘Teach us, tell us what acts we should make.’ Very often, however, it is too late for them. Let us act in such a way that this misfortune does not befall us, and let us try to do all we can to benefit from the graces God has given us. I ask Him in His goodness to be merciful to us and to help us to do what He asks of us. I ask Him to help me to do my duty by giving you the necessary instructions, since He has chosen me, although a wretched sinner, to serve you.”

Holy Mary, help the wretched. . . .

**50. - REQUEST MADE TO A PRIEST TO ACCEPT THE DUTY
OF CHAPLAIN AT THE HÔTEL-DIEU**

(May 20, 1655)

On Thursday, May 20, 1655, a priest came to see M. Vincent and left after he had spoken with him. M. Vincent, who was about to go into the city, asked where the priest was. When he had been told that he had gone, he himself left right away and had his carriage speed up in order to overtake that good priest. Catching up with him in the faubourg Saint-Denis, he invited him to get into the carriage. When that good man tried to excuse himself, M. Vincent said to him: “Monsieur, please get in; I have something to propose to you.” The man accepted, and M. Vincent began by saying to him:

“Monsieur, I have been thinking of asking if you would be willing to accept a modest position in a place where a good priest is needed. Here is the situation: there are usually six priests at the Hôtel-Dieu in this city; they are maintained there to hear the confessions of all the poor persons who go to the Hôtel-Dieu and to have them make a general confession. It is a place where there is great good to be done and many services to be rendered to God. The Ladies of Charity give one hundred fifty livres to each of them for this purpose; and right now they eat with the community. Following are the pros and cons that should either prompt you to accept this position or to refuse it:

“First, the great good to be done; for all the poor persons who go there either die there or are cured. If they die, there is reason to hope that they are saved, after having made a general confession when they arrived; so, you will have cooperated in the salvation of souls, who will pray for you. If they are healed, there is reason to hope that they will take greater care not to fall into their sins again and will profit from the good advice you will have given them. So you see, Monsieur, that the benefit in both cases is very great and most pleasing to God.

“The argument against that, and the one that might hinder your giving yourself to God to become involved in that good work, is perhaps some anxiety concerning the tainted air circulating among the patients there, and the fact that you would not have time to go here and there in the city to take care of your business affairs. Now, in response to this first objection, Monsieur, let me tell you that I know of no more than one or two priests who have died there during the past seven or eight years. The biggest difficulty occurs when people are starting out. After that, however, they get used to that atmosphere, and there is no problem. Then, too, God provides special assistance to those who have given themselves to Him to serve Him in the best way. After all, do not our lives belong to Him? Could we do anything better than to use them for His service?

“As for the other matter, it is true that you would have to dispose of all those business affairs you might have in the city because, once you are there, it is not easy to get out since there is always work to do with the large number of poor persons there.

“So, that is what I had to say to you. I have given you the pros and the cons: on the one hand, the great good to be done and the excellence of this ministry, which is so pleasing to Our Lord that He Himself came, as He said, to evangelize persons who were poor; and on the other hand, the things that might hinder you from accepting this holy ministry. So then, Monsieur, please reflect on it between now and next Saturday and come to tell me what you have decided because the matter is somewhat urgent. Meanwhile, go im-

mediately to see M. Ladvocat on my behalf, and tell him why I am sending you to him so that he will not appoint someone else for it.”¹

**50a. - DEPOSITION CONCERNING NICOLAS SEVIN,
COADJUTOR BISHOP-ELECT OF CAHORS**

(June 8, 1656)

The respected and knowledgeable man Vincent de Paul, priest and Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, about seventy-six years of age,¹ residing in his house of Saint-Lazare, near Paris, previously sworn in with his hand on his heart, replied as follows:

To the first point he replied that he had been well acquainted with the Most Illustrious Coadjutor-elect for fourteen years because he often had contact with him; he declared also that he was not related to him by blood or marriage, nor was his competitor, nor his close associate, nor his enemy.

To the second and third he said that eight years ago the Coadjutor-elect was consecrated Bishop of Sarlat and since that time has continued to be head of that same church.

To the fourth he replied affirmatively.²

To the fifth he said that he knows that the Coadjutor-elect (he knows him well [this is crossed out]) has made a solemn visitation of his church of Sarlat and his entire diocese every year, to the great

¹The priest accepted the ministry that Saint Vincent was proposing to him.

Document 50a. - *Vincentiana* (1968), 1, pp. 64-65, written in Latin. This excerpt from the Vatican Archives, *Processus consistoriales*, vol. 54, fols. 518-31, is Saint Vincent's testimony before Nicolò Guido di Bagno, Apostolic Nuncio to France, in the information process of June 8, 1656, prior to the appointment of Nicolas Sevin as Coadjutor, with right of succession, to Alain de Solminihac, Bishop of Cahors.

Among those also giving depositions were François Caulet, Bishop of Pamiers; Henri de Béthune, Archbishop of Bordeaux; François Perrochel, Bishop of Boulogne-sur-Mer; and Hippolyte Féret, Pastor of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet in Paris (fols. 527v-528r). Ten questions were asked of each.

¹This document provides another indication of the age of Saint Vincent; he is "about seventy-six years of age" or, in canonical terminology, in his seventy-seventh year.

²The fourth question asked whether Sevin had a known residence, and did he maintain a residence.

consolation of souls, and has also taken care of the needs of his faithful in a timely manner.

To the sixth he replied that he often celebrated Mass not only on solemn feast days but also on other days, held ordinations, and administered the sacrament of Confirmation, in due time and in accord with what necessity, practice, and other pontifical duties required of him.

To the seventh he said he was also sure that in governing his diocese he has given many examples of piety, charity, and pastoral prudence and has preached quite frequently in many churches in his diocese, even the most distant ones, where he has accomplished a great deal by word and example.

To the eighth he said that he knows he has always acted prudently and has been steadfast in defending and increasing the rights of his church, sparing neither labor nor expense, thereby incurring the hostility of many.

To the ninth he said that he excels in learning and at present upholds the doctrine required in a Bishop in order to be able to teach others.

To the tenth he replied that he knows the nomination of the Most Illustrious Bishop of Sarlat as Coadjutor Bishop of Cahors will be most useful, with no loss to the Sarlat diocese, since Cahors is only six³ French leagues away at the most, and nothing should prevent the Coadjutor-elect, who is the right age and in good health, from being able to fulfill his obligations in the Sarlat diocese and to carry out the duties of Coadjutor of the Cahors diocese. From all this it is clear that the Most Illustrious Bishop of Cahors, who is already advanced in age and whose health is precarious, could not make a better choice, nor could our Most Christian King name a more qualified man to the office of Coadjutor Bishop of Cahors.

VINCENT DE PAUL

³Probably an error of the notary, who transformed eighteen leagues into six. Sarlat is about seventy-two kilometers from Cahors, i.e., about eighteen leagues, not six.

**50b. - AUTHORIZATION FOR SISTER ANGÉLIQUE LE ROY
TO LEAVE HER CONVENT**

We, Vincent de Paul, Superior G[enera]l of the Congrega[tion] of the Mission and Spiritual Father of the nuns of the Visitation Sainte-Marie of Paris, send greetings to you, our dear Sister Françoise-Angélique Le Roy, one of the nuns of the First Monastery of that city.

The Mother Superior of your house in Le Mans has asked us for a Sister from your local community to help her bear the yoke of Our Lord in the government of her house and to contribute to the sanctification God asks of the souls who live there. Knowing that God has blessed your leadership in all the duties you have had up to the present, we have chosen and assigned you, and do choose and assign you, to go to your house in Le Mans, accompanied by Sister Marie-Joseph Trouillet, and to remain there for the aforesaid purpose until holy obedience ordains otherwise.

We order you to lower your veils on entering the towns through which you will pass and to conduct yourselves everywhere according to the Rules and practices of your holy Institute so that God may be honored by this and your neighbor edified. I ask His Divine Goodness to honor you with His protection and to continue to bless you.

Given at Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, October 16, 1656.

VINCENT DEPAUL,¹
i.s.C.M.

On the back: Eighteenth-century inscription: Authorization from Saint Vincent de Paul for our Most Honored Sister Françoise-Angélique Le Roy de la Grange.

**51. - ADDRESS TO THE PRIESTS OF SAINT-SULPICE
AT THE DEATH OF THEIR FOUNDER**

(April 1657)

Dear Brothers, when I saw the grief into which you are plunged by the death of your dear Father, I would have liked to return him to you to wipe away your tears. Since, however, I am unable to give you his living body, I thought I should present you with his spirit, which is the better part of him. The earth holds his body, heaven his soul, but his spirit is for you; and, if God judged him worthy of a place in paradise with the angels, you should not find him unworthy of also having a place in your hearts. He will have gladly left his body, provided his spirit dwell in you. That was his greatest desire and wish during his life; now that he has died, you can make him happy.

It was said in the Law that, if a brother died without children, his other brother had to *raise up seed*.¹ Your father, whom I can also call your brother (because of his age), died without children, so to speak, given the desire he had to convert the whole world and to sanctify the clergy. He has left you his spouse: this holy house acquired by his blood and death, since he died trying to give it his life. Raise up children for him by making Jesus known, assuring him, if possible, of as many servants as there are men, and giving him as many holy, sacrificial persons as there are priests in the Church. *Make them according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.*²

Document 51. - Abbé Étienne-Michel Faillon, *Vie de M. Olier* (3 vols., Paris: Poussielgue, 1873), vol. III, p. 476. Faillon writes concerning this talk: "M. Leschassier (a Sulpician contemporary of M. Olier) informs us that, after the death of M. Olier, that holy priest gave them some solace which tempered their sadness somewhat, and there is every reason to believe that the following words, in the handwriting of M. de Bretonvilliers, are a fragment of that moving address." Faillon rightly adds that the style of the discourse is more like that of M. de Bretonvilliers than that of Saint Vincent.

¹Cf. Gen 38:8; Dt 25:5-6; Mt 22:24. (NAB) Written in Latin.

²Cf. Ex 25:40 (NAB). Written in Latin.

**52. - ADVICE TO A FRIEND WHO DESIRED AN AGREEMENT
WITH THE JANSENISTS**

Monsieur, when a dispute is settled, there is no other agreement to be made than to follow the decision given on it. Before those men were condemned, they did everything possible to make falsehood prevail over truth, and tried so zealously to get the upper hand that people hardly dared to stand up to them because they refused to hear of any arrangement. Since even the Holy See settled matters to their disadvantage, they gave different meanings to the Constitutions to avoid putting them into effect.

And, what is more, although they pretended to submit sincerely to the common Father of the faithful and to receive the Constitutions in the true sense in which he condemned the propositions of Jansenius, the writers of their party who maintained those opinions and who wrote books and apologies to defend them have still not said or written a single word to disclaim them.

What kind of agreement, then, can we make with them, if they do not have a genuine, sincere intention to submit? What modification can be brought to bear on what the Church has decided? These are matters of faith that can admit of no changes or adjustments; consequently, we cannot adapt them to the opinions of those gentlemen. It is, however, up to them to submit their insights and to unite with us in one same belief by genuine, sincere submission to the Head of the Church. Otherwise, Monsieur, there is nothing else to be done except to pray for their conversion.

**53. - DEDICATION TO SAINT VINCENT
OF DICTIONNAIRE DE LA LANGUE DE MADAGASCAR**

(1658)

To M. Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission.

Document 52. - Abelly, *op. cit.*, bk. II, chap. XII, p. 438.

Document 53. - This dedication is at the beginning of the work written by Étienne de Flacourt, Governor of Madagascar (cf. VIII, 95, n. 1).

Monsieur,

The poor islanders of Madagascar will be forever obliged for their conversion, after God, to your house alone, particularly for your concern, charity, and zeal in procuring this great benefit for them by sending several of your Missionaries, as you have done, to teach them the mysteries of our religion and how to pray and serve God, and to guide them in the ways of their salvation. From the family of the illustrious Society of Jesus arose men like Ignatius, Xavier, and many other important persons, who spent their days, either personally or through their children, in the conversion of heretics, preaching the Gospel throughout Europe, and spreading the faith among the most barbarian and remote nations on earth. In like manner, Monsieur, through your concern and that of your charitable Congregation in its early beginnings, we have already seen many excellent, zealous persons spread throughout Europe, who have worked for twenty years and are working incessantly at the salvation of the faithful, in the instruction of country people, and in bringing back heretics gone astray from the truth.

The proof of this is seen not only in France and Italy, but even in Poland, Ireland, Scotland, the Hebrides, Barbary, and that great island of Madagascar, where we are already seeing the well-ripened fruits that were planted by the care, long vigils, and fatigue of the late Messieurs Gondrée,¹ Nacquart,² Mousnier,³ Prévost,⁴ and Dufour,⁵ who gloriously ended their days there, and how M. Bourdaise,⁶ the only priest of that Congregation remaining on the island, does not waste a moment of time. He instructs, exhorts, baptizes, and administers the other sacraments of the Church daily to the new converts. The difficulties are so great that it is to be feared that, if he is not soon helped, he may succumb to them, as did the late M. Nacquart who, realizing that he was the only missionary,

¹Nicolas Gondrée (cf. *VIII*, 181, n. 5).

²Charles Nacquart (cf. *VIII*, 181, n. 5).

³Jean-François Mousnier (cf. *VIII*, 181, n. 5).

⁴Nicolas Prévost (cf. *VIII*, 181, n. 4).

⁵Claude Dufour (cf. *VIII*, 180, n. 4).

⁶Toussaint Bourdaise (cf. *VIII*, 104, n. 5).

allowed himself to get carried away by his zeal and risked his life to convert those poor islanders. As a result, in one year's time he baptized more than four hundred persons of both sexes and all ages.

Since the mysteries of our religion, Monsieur, can be explained only by word of mouth, and be understood only by hearing, if those who desire to go to that great island are to make the progress they wish there, they must strive diligently—and as early as possible—to learn the most necessary words of the language and the most suitable terms to express their thoughts and concepts to the indigenous people. To achieve this, I have written this dictionary and little catechism and the fundamentals of the language, which I am presenting to you, so that, while those whom you will send there are at sea, they may begin to learn to speak and can practice with one another. It contains everything I was able to gather and learn, both from my French interpreters and from the books I found among the Ombiasses or writers, for the almost seven years I conversed familiarly with those islanders. I learned from them to read the Arabic characters common to them and began to understand their manner of speaking. Since that language has many similarities with Arabic, in its speech patterns as well as in its phrases and characters, it is very necessary that the priests who will go to that island learn at least to read in Arabic so that, if any books of the Ombiasses should fall into their hands, they will be able to learn better, by reading them, the manner of speaking and explaining that must be used to instruct those poor islanders.

Receive, Monsieur, with my most humble regards, this little booklet, published through the care and generosity of M. de Belles. I present it to you as the first fruits of my labors on that island, in recognition of my obligations to you and of the friendship with which you honor me on every occasion. Accept my eagerness to describe myself all my life by the title, Monsieur, of your most humble, very obedient, and very grateful servant.

DE FLACOURT

**54. - ACCOUNT OF A CONVERSATION WITH A PRIEST
WHO FAVORED JANSENISM**

Bearing in mind before God what I should do on this occasion, I thought that, according to the rule of the Gospel, I should mention the matter privately to Damasus¹ by way of a parable. So, one day, when I was speaking with him in a friendly way, I said: "Monsieur, since you are a great preacher, I have some advice to ask of you concerning something that occurs with us Missionaries when we go to work in the rural areas, where we sometimes find persons who do not believe the truths of our religion. We are hard pressed to know how we should act to persuade them. That is why I ask you to tell me what you think we could do on those occasions to prompt them to believe matters of faith."

Damasus answered me with some feeling: "Why are you asking me that?"

I replied: "Because, Monsieur, the poor come to the rich to receive some assistance and charity; and, since we are poor ignorant men, we do not know how we should treat divine matters, and are turning to you to ask you to instruct us in that."

Damasus recovered almost immediately and replied that he would like to teach the Christian truths: (1) through Holy Scripture; (2) through the Fathers; (3) through some reasoning; (4) through the common consent of Catholic people of the past centuries; (5) through the many martyrs who had shed their blood for the confession of those same truths; and (6) through all the miracles God had done in confirmation of them.

When he had concluded, I told him how very good that was, and I asked him to put all those things in writing, very simply and unpretentiously, and to send them to me. He did so two or three days later, bringing them to me himself. I thanked him for this and said: "I am greatly indebted to you, and it gives me special joy to see you in these good dispositions and to learn them from you yourself. For, besides benefitting from them for my personal use, they will serve

Document 54. - Abelly, *op. cit.*, bk. III, chap. XVI, sect. 1, p. 254, taken from the original, in the Saint's handwriting.

¹A fictitious name.

me even to justify you. Perhaps you will find it hard to believe what I am going to tell you; nevertheless, it is very true, namely, that there are some persons who are convinced and who say that you do not have the proper dispositions regarding matters of faith. Try then, Monsieur, to finish what you have begun so well; and after having defended your faith by what you have written, give yourself to God to live in a manner not only far from the appearance of what is said about you, but also in a way that can edify people." I added that, the more important a person was—he himself, for example—the more obligated he was to devote himself to virtue, and for that reason those who wrote the life of Saint Charles Borromeo² said that virtue was even greater virtue when found in a person of higher position—like a precious stone, which had even greater brilliance when it was set in a gold ring than if the ring were made of lead.

Damasus agreed with that and, indicating that henceforth he wanted to act that way, he went away, leaving me very happy to see him with such strong determination.

**55. - AUTHORIZATION FOR SISTER CATHERINE-AGNES LIONNE
TO LEAVE HER CONVENT**

(June 8, 1658)

Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and Spiritual Father of the Visitation Monasteries of Paris, by authority of the Most Eminent Cardinal de Retz,¹ Archbishop of Paris, to our very dear and beloved Sister in Our Lord, Sister Catherine-Agnès Lionne, former Superior of the Abbeville Monastery, greetings in the love of Jesus Christ.

It has come to our attention that the Sisters of your Amiens Monastery, assembled in Chapter, elected you to be their Mother Supe-

²Cardinal-Archbishop of Milan and a prominent figure of the Tridentine reform (1538-84).

Document 55. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, tracing of a signed document.

¹Jean-François-Paul de Gondi, Abbé de Buzay (cf. VIII, 33, n. 1).

rior. Assenting to the entreaty and request they have made to us, and so that the merit of obedience may contribute to all you will do for the advancement of God's glory and the benefit of souls, we order you to go there as soon as possible and to live there in the perfect observance of your Rules, Constitutions, and the customs of your Congregation. All this should be done in accord with the spirit of your Institute, under obedience to the Most Reverend Bishop of Amiens² or those who will order you on his behalf, until you are recalled either by us or our successors, if it is deemed suitable.

Asking God to guide you and to keep you always under His protection, we bless you.

Given at Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, June 8, 1658.

VINCENT DEPAUL

**56. - ADVICE TO MONSIEUR LOGER,
ATTORNEY AT THE PARLEMENT**

(November 2, 1658)

M. Vincent was obliged to speak with M. Loger, our attorney at the Parlement, during the retreat M. Vincent was making in this year 1658.¹ Among other things he discussed with him, after discussing the matter concerning the Saint-Lazare house, for which he had sent for him, he spoke to him about his state and calling as attorney and told him he could work out his salvation as well in his position as attorney as a Capuchin could in his. For, he said, whoever resists good order, resists God, and whoever keeps and observes good order, is pleasing to God.

Justice is established by God; and since He is invisible, He has established it here on earth in visible persons in order to render jus-

²François Lefèvre de Caumartin.

Document 56. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Repetitions of Prayer, Conferences, and Talks to the Missionaries, MS., fol. 82v.

¹Written in the margin of the manuscript: "Note: M. Vincent began his retreat on Saturday, October 25, 1658, and finished it on Monday, November 4, of the same year."

tice to everyone. Among those officers established in this way, there are some raised to various functions, some only to judge, others to aid, dispose, and explain matters that are presented to be judged, as do lawyers and attorneys for the affairs that are to be judged.

God has included you among these, by order of His Providence. If, in this practice, you conduct yourself according to God and in the manner He desires, it is certain that you will, in the end, find your salvation in it. For you see, Monsieur, that a man in his position of attorney can also work out his salvation in this calling—with this difference, however, that the Capuchin has many more means of carrying out his duties well, that is, to whatever his profession of Capuchin obliges him—unlike a lawyer or an attorney, because of the business pressures encountered in their work and the difficult circumstances that arise in the world in which they are obliged to live. Look at the Comptroller M. Desbordes: a widower, a person of quality, and Vicomte de Soudé. That man loves God more than I could tell you, but with a tangible love. In addition, he has a wonderful gift for settling disagreements. I am well aware that the state of a Capuchin is more perfect than the lay state; nevertheless, even though his state is not as perfect as that of the Capuchin, the layman can still attain such a high degree of virtue and perfection, due allowance being made of his state of layman and his calling of attorney, that he will equal that of the Capuchin, considering his profession of Capuchin.

57. - JOURNAL OF THE LAST DAYS OF SAINT VINCENT

June 5, 1660

Did M. Jolly, ¹ the Superior in Rome, speak to you in his last letter about the ordination [retreat] in Rome? ²

Document 57. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original in the handwriting of Jean Gicquel, Priest of the Mission (cf. VIII, 79, n. 7); there is no doubt that he is the author of this diary.

¹Edme Jolly (cf. VIII, 7, n. 1).

²This question is being asked by one of the Assistants; the response is Saint Vincent's.

—Here is his letter telling us that they are in the ordination [retreat] of Pentecost with twenty-three ordinands, who are doing very well; but this is the problem: there is some opposition to this work, and it is rather strong. Long before the ordination a Cardinal had told me that giving retreats was the affair of their Society; in addition, the secretary's clerk said to me that the same examiner had told the secretary it was unlikely that so many persons of quality would be obliged to come to the Mission, and he would have someone speak to the Pope³ about it—which I have been told he did. The Holy Father, however, convinced of the good results of the ordination [retreat], was unwilling to change anything. It is the Society of Jesus that sets up obstacles. What could wretched nature and prudence itself do in those circumstances?

(1) We could go to complain to that body and to that Society, either all together or in private.

(2) We could complain to their friends in order to get them at least to speak to them about it.

(3) We could complain to our own friends in order to get them to use their influence and authority.

(4) Lastly, we could take a stand opposed to that group; we could take sides to humiliate them, for that is the way of nature and the world.

And not to do so, according to the maxims of the world, is to be stupid, unintelligent, lacking opinions, etc.

Since, however, those maxims are merely quicksand, and the maxims of Jesus Christ are all like solid rocks, and it is the inviolable maxim and practice of the Company to follow these maxims, please, gentlemen, let us hold fast and let us always stand by our opinions. This is a paradox of nature, but let her scold and let us hold fast.

(1) And to accomplish this, we will not say a word to that body,

(2) even less to any of their friends,

(3) and not even a single word to our own friends.

³Alexander VII (1655-67).

(4) We will not take sides, and not only will we not take sides against that Society but, far from that, we must, following the maxims of Jesus Christ, stand up for them and seek to have them praised, etc., for it would not be enough to remain indifferent in their regard and to say: "Oh well; let it go! We have to continue to serve God just as much, and forget about that."

That language comes from nature; more must be done, for we actually have to be of service to them, and to seek and desire in everything the occasions to do so.

That Father examiner said this and believes he must do it; he thinks he is doing something good, and has a hard time convincing himself that strangers like us, quasi-Gentiles in Rome—for we are so far away—can succeed in this kind of work.

One time, during a similar opposition, I was really strongly moved by that thought, and I still feel it. All we have to do is to walk straight ahead and do well to make everyone our friend—even our protector.

And I think, gentlemen, that we have to be satisfied with that, praying fervently that God will grant us the grace to walk so straight here, radically and from the very beginning, and to hold so fast to our Rules and the maxims of Jesus Christ, in Rome and elsewhere, that people will find nothing to criticize, remembering Our Lord, of whom it is said that *I have made you a sign that will be opposed*.⁴ But what do I do, wretch that I am, and what a comparison! Oh! Forgive me, my Savior! Let us be steadfast, then, gentlemen.

—A Daughter of Charity from their nearby house⁵ wants a certain priest of the Company as her Director, or she says she is not suitable, or will not make any communication here in this house but rather to a secular priest, even though she is forbidden to do so, and goes so far as to imagine and to say that confidentiality in her regard would not be kept. She is the niece of M. Gautier the Missionary⁶ and has persisted in this stubbornness for the past four years.⁷

⁴Cf. Lk 2:34 (NAB). This, and all other words or phrases in italics are in Latin in the original.

⁵Their Motherhouse, located opposite Saint-Lazare.

⁶Denis Gautier (cf. IV, 30, n. 1).

⁷This problem is presented by Jean Dehorgny (cf. VIII, 22, n. 7).

—Inform M. d'Hauteville⁸ that this attitude is unsuitable, that she will not change, will not even work out her salvation, and should be dismissed as soon as possible.

—A Sister arrived from Brittany ten days ago, and she has put the same thing into her head; but perhaps that will pass.

—She is starting to become obstinate too soon; I think she should be dismissed.

June 6, 1660

—M. de Nesmond the Presiding Judge⁹ and the Abbé, who are leaving, must have spoken to you privately about our affairs.

—We spoke for a long time, but here is the subject of our conversation, which I feel obliged to mention so that the Company will [not] use that maxim as a basis for leadership, which is lamentable. We talked about rendering justice, and he spoke in this way: "It is impossible to render justice, to do justice in the midst of many affairs. One must either cut and trim without question on coming to a decision, or handle only one affair a week and bring the parties to an agreement. I think we have benefitted by losing the decision; it is greater justice to let it go; for, even if all the judges should spend four hours in studying and settling what can be settled and decided in a moment, we would see neither the basis nor the truth of it, and that is how it ends; and so we send them off."

Now, gentlemen, we should pay close attention to that maxim, taking new resolutions to come to an agreement and settle our own affairs. And the Company, gentlemen, should benefit from this advice that God has been pleased to give us. This is true; for everyone complains that they make short work of things and go too quickly; and they themselves not only recognize this but make a maxim of it and, what is more, are convinced that they cannot do otherwise.

⁸The only information about François d'Hauteville, C.M., is that he was Superior in Montmirail in 1660.

⁹François-Théodore de Nesmond (cf. III, 411, n. 5). The last part of the name is crossed out on the original so we are not absolutely sure that our reading is correct.

—When the mother of a young man who is on retreat learned that he was here, she asked that he be withdrawn and locked up with the licentious or immoral men.¹⁰

—Since he came to the retreat of his own accord, his good mother must be told that this cannot be done and is never done. Besides his losing the fruits of his retreat, it would make him bitter. Tell her we cannot do it.

June 7, 1660

Present were Messieurs Alméras, Berthe,¹¹ and Gicquel.

—We have thirty-four retreatants today, which is rare, and another three or four have been deferred. The number could go as high as one hundred if you do not establish some regulation about that; for, besides the expense, we do not have enough beds or Directors, and we have to give most of them young students as directors.¹²

—We will set the number at twenty and settle on that. Since charity is a virtue, it does not require us to go to excess.

It is not that we do not have great reason to humble ourselves in believing that God has taken into consideration the fidelity that has been brought to that, without which He would not make the retreats here so attractive; and the Company should consider itself fortunate with this number. If, by doing good, it is ruined and destroyed, it will have done all it can hope to do. To wear oneself out for God, to have happiness and strength only to consume them for God, is to do what Our Lord Himself did, who exhausted Himself for love of His Father.

I said a short while ago that we had never asked or refused anything—never any ministry that did not come from God, and never refused any. This requires some explanation: I mean to excess, except what was too much for us; e.g., the direction of the General Hospital in Paris had been given us by the King and the Parlement;

¹⁰In the Saint-Lazare prison.

¹¹René Alméras the younger (cf. VIII, 77, n. 4) and Thomas Berthe (cf. VIII, 13, n. 1).

¹²This reflection was made by René Alméras, Assistant of the house.

nevertheless, we refused it because it was too much for us. Virtue loves discernment and can never be excessive—neither too little nor too much.

—The members of the community and parish of Saint-Nicolas¹³ have managed to get from the King half of the furnishings of the Archbishop of Trabzon,¹⁴ who died in the arms of M. Watebled,¹⁵ Superior at the Bons-Enfants, to whom he had given verbally one thousand livres, which he was keeping for him. Those gentlemen are asking for the one thousand livres, but it is said that we can tell them the intention of the deceased and remain in possession.

—The deceased had given that sum on deposit and had drawn a letter on it by which it is clear that it is a deposit. It has not pleased God for you to have it, even though the man said it to you, because he should have written or done what is required for that. The King, the true heir and master of this property, is giving it; they have the right to it internally and legally; you have no apparent legal right to it. It must be given to them—and willingly. A strong friendship exists between us. . . .¹⁶

Wednesday, September 15, 1660

—You have decided to name a Superioress today for those good Daughters of Charity. At what time? Who will it be? And how would you like them to receive her and for her to receive the others?

—M. Dehorgny, have them assemble and, after the conference, announce to them the choice God has made of Sister [Marguerite Chétif]¹⁷ as Superioress. Tell them beforehand that they will all

¹³Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet parish and the Community of the Nicolaites, founded by Adrien Bourdoise.

¹⁴Augustin Fracioti, Archbishop *in partibus* (1654-59) of Trabzon, a port city on the Black Sea.

¹⁵Jean Watebled (cf. VIII, 196, n. 2).

¹⁶The pages that followed have been lost; this accounts for the gap between June 7 and September 15.

¹⁷On August 27 Saint Vincent had announced to the Community his choice of Marguerite Chétif (cf. VIII, 122, n. 4) as Superioress General; the ceremony of installation took place on September 15.

kiss her hands as a sign of acknowledgment, and she will embrace them; take a look around at the faces and expressions of the members of the Community, especially of the two or three who were officers and who perhaps had it in mind.

—The three Sisters who are supposed to go to Poland have not yet been notified; when would you like them to be informed?

—It is time; do it today. The poor Sisters are admirable in their submission and adaptability; they have only to be told.

—The one who has been named Superior does nothing but weep all day long, as do several of the others. She is having a hard time accepting the duty.

—God be praised for such a disposition! That will pass.

—The Sisters who have been notified about Poland are ready and ask only when they will leave.

—Tell them it will be next Friday. God be praised for having prepared the hearts of those poor Sisters in this way! Sisters for Poland—and here they are, ready to go! I have to talk to them and explain how they will find things there. I also have to tell them especially how to act with regard to the King and Queen, the Priests of the Mission, poor persons, the Sisters, etc.

Thursday, September 16, 1660

—The Bishop of Narbonne ¹⁸ wants to open a seminary, but he is forming a union of the church and parish of Notre-Dame la Maiour with his seminary to give his seminarians practice there in their functions.

—We could accept the parish with the seminary, although that goes a little beyond what our Institute maintains, which is not to hear confessions in cathedral towns, etc.

—He is setting two other conditions for his union: (1) that he can dismiss priests whenever he sees fit and oblige you to furnish others; and (2) that we will dispose of the revenue only to benefit that seminary, unless we have his consent and that of his successors.

¹⁸François Fouquet (cf. VIII, 5, n. 6).

This seems to imply an obligation of giving an account, which is contrary to our practice.

—Explain to him that this is not our practice either in France or even in Rome, but just the opposite; ask him to agree that, if we have the honor of being of service to him, it be in the way we do it everywhere, and hold to that.

—But, Monsieur, if he were to send the Missionaries away with the consent of the General or of the Visitor, that would ease matters.

—We must not allow an infraction of this line of conduct for any situation whatsoever.

—He is asking for two Missionaries, in addition to the three, and a coadjutor Brother, for his missions and visitations he has indicated, on the promise you made him of sending him some.

—Give him M. Delespiney, ¹⁹ who is on hand in Marseilles, and the seminarian Brother Parisy, ²⁰ whom he will ordain a priest. He is ready for that. Apologize to him for our shortage of personnel.

—The Bishop of Montauban is transferring the seminary from Montech to his town and is uniting it to the Mission. He is giving the Missionaries charge of its temporal and spiritual affairs, with permanent authority to give missions in his diocese.

—Write him that we thank him with all possible respect for having accepted our modest services and for his choice of our unworthy persons. Tell him also that we are returning our signed acceptance to him, as he instructed us to do.

—The canons, who are selling the property where the church and seminary will be built request four conditions:

- (1) That we go to the general processions in a body;
- (2) That we will ask permission to carry the cross in them;
- (3) That we will administer the sacraments only to those in the house and seminary;
- (4) That we will bury there only those from the house and seminary—but they do not insist too strongly on this.

¹⁹Gabriel Delespiney (cf. VIII, 69, n. 3).

²⁰Antoine Parisy (cf. VIII, 19, n. 4).

—With regard to the first two, they [the processions] are a burdensome responsibility greatly distracting from the seminary exercises, and we cannot accept them; as for the last two, however, we will gladly observe them. We will submit to them all the more willingly since that is our practice.

For eight to ten days M. Vincent's legs have stopped oozing and have not added to his pain. These past three days they have started up again and have produced clots of pus the size of a finger.

—M. Manchon, Father Eudes' second preacher, is downstairs. They have just finished that huge, glorious mission in the faubourg Saint-Germain. He says that the Prince de Conti ²¹ sent him to ask you for Missionaries to work in the Narbonne diocese with them and some others the Prince is taking there.

—Say that I am very sorry, but I am in no condition to speak to him and that, with regard to the Prince's proposal, I will send M. Berthe tomorrow to give him an account of what we can do, renew our respects to him, etc., and inform him that he will find in Narbonne some Missionaries whom we have sent to the Bishop, and they will work wherever the Bishop chooses to use them. I must confess that the minds of those good gentlemen seem overzealous and excited. May God be our all and keep us from having such persons in the Company.

—How much money shall be given to the four ²² who are leaving for Poland tomorrow?

—About one hundred écus here and a letter of credit in Rouen to get as much more, in the event that the Queen ²³ may not have made arrangements for the entire embarkation.

²¹ Armand de Bourbon (cf. VIII, 62, n. 4).

²² The four Sisters.

²³ Louise-Marie de Gonzague (cf. VIII, 88, n. 2).

Friday, September 17, 1660

—What will be the topic for this evening's conference to the Company?

—Speak on the retreat. Three points: (1) The reasons for making the retreat well; (2) why some benefit less from it; (3) what should be done before, during, and after it.

—M. Talec,²⁴ the Superior at Saint-Charles, asks, after being purged in the infirmary here in this house, to go to Rougemont²⁵ for a few days for some fresh air and to get his strength back.

—That is justifiable; he has worked all year long. Give him a student and let them go there; have the Procurator see that they are sent there.

—Abbé de Saint-Jean²⁶ is not feeling well; if you tell him to go, he will surely do so.

—Since he is so weak and is having such difficulty breathing, I am afraid he may get worse; however, go to see him. If you can persuade him to go, I will be very pleased, and if so, send a Brother there to do the cooking.

Saturday, September 18, 1660

M. Watebled, the Superior at the Bons-Enfants, is asking for a teacher and Procurator in place of M. de Brière.²⁷

—I heard that the scholastic theology being taught at the Bons-Enfants is of little or no use; and I thought about eliminating it, especially since they go from the collège to [the Collège de] Navarre or the Sorbonne to study scholastic theology. So, two classes of moral theology should be taught and give them practice in the functions. I know M. Watebled will find that difficult; *mais quoi!* do whatever is necessary.

²⁴Nicolas Talec (cf. VI, 158, n. 5).

²⁵The Rougemont farm (cf. VIII, 120, n. 2).

²⁶Claude-Charles de Rochechouart de Chandenier (cf. VIII, 132, n. 1).

²⁷Nicolas de la Brière (cf. VIII, 196, n. 1).

Four houses in Paris are doing the same thing: the Oratory, Saint-Sulpice, Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet, and the beggary²⁸ at the Bons-Enfants. At Saint-Sulpice they tend toward and do everything to enlighten their minds, disengaging them from earthly attachments, directing them toward great insights and lofty sentiments; and we see that all those who have gone through there have much of that in common. In many it increases and decreases, and I do not know if they take scholastic theology.

At Saint-Nicolas they are not so lofty but tend to the work of the vineyard and the preparation of men who will work hard at their priestly functions; for that purpose they maintain things that are: (1) always practical; (2) always humble, such as sweeping, washing spoons, cleaning, etc, and lowly; and they can do this because most of them are there free of charge, so that is why they do well.

Saturday, September 18, 1660

As for the Oratory, let us leave it alone and not mention it.

Of all these four houses, the one that is unquestionably the most successful is Saint-Nicolas, where there are so many little suns everywhere; and I have never seen anyone complain about this, but edification everywhere.

That is the most useful, then, and we should strive for it and try to imitate them, at the very least. You know they never do scholastic theology—only moral theology and conferences on practical matters. I am very much inclined to hope that God will grant us the grace to follow their example.

All week long M. Vincent went to Communion during Mass in the chapel, except today, and was much better than last week, although the departure for Poland, the election of the Superioress of the [Daughters of] Charity, and the leaving of some priests from the house gave him extra work.

²⁸The Congregation of the Mission.

Sunday, September 19, 1660

—M. Watebled the Superior is asking us to recall the older M. Le Vazeux,²⁹ who is at the Bons-Enfants. He has a harmful effect on everything there: he is unruly, spreads scandal, complains constantly, and is always out.

—That poor man will cause trouble for the Company; we must seek God's help and pray. Write to tell him that we are going to begin the retreat and that he should come to make it.

—M. Le Vazeux was surprised that you were recalling him. Seeing that you have just sent away another man who was less guilty, he has been on his guard; he asked M. Watebled to bring you a letter and to tell you soon that he requests you to allow him to leave and that he was withdrawing because:

(1) His father is getting old and his family is being ruined because they have no protection; (2) he has always had a terrible loathing for our vows, which he thinks must be the ruin of the Company; (3) in a word, that he could neither restrain himself nor follow the Rules of the Community, and has had no rest for eight months.

—O my Savior, what a grace you grant us in freeing us of such a person, brilliant to the point of being too intellectual and haughty! O gentlemen, how we can thank God! During Holy Mass especially, let us please thank and adore God and be very grateful to Him.

O my God, how well you know how to direct your work, and how clearly you make it seen that it is Yours! So then, gentlemen, let us give thanks once again.

I am writing to tell him that I consent most willingly to his withdrawal so that he may seek his rest and relief.

For the four or five days that followed, M. Vincent often repeated at each meeting: "What grounds for thanking God for having freed us, etc.!"

²⁹ Achille Le Vazeux (cf. VII, 40, n. 13).

Sunday, September 19 and 26, 1660

That day I began a retreat that lasted until Sunday, September 26, on which, after M. Vincent had someone get him up and dressed, he was carried to Mass, although he was already a little drowsy. His drowsiness increased so much there that, when he was being carried back, the doctor felt he was in danger of death. He was given a mild laxative, and the illness worsened during the afternoon to such an extent that at six-thirty M. Dehorgny administered Extreme Unction to him in the presence of Messieurs de Beaumont, ³⁰ Bajoue, ³¹ Maillart, ³² Gicquel, and others.

When everyone was there, M. Dehorgny asked him:

—Do you want to receive the Last Sacraments, Monsieur?

—“Yes.”

—Do you believe all that the Church teaches?

—“Yes.”

—Do you believe in one God in three Persons, Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit?

—“Yes.”

Although he made a great effort to respond, he was able to say only two or three intelligible words; we could not hear the rest.

All of the usual questions followed.

—Do you ask forgiveness of everyone?

—“With all my heart.”

—Do you forgive everyone?

—“No one ever. . . .” By which he meant “No one ever offended me.”

Afterward, came all the acts of faith, hope, trust, contrition, offering, and love.

—Monsieur, we are going to say the *Confiteor* for you, and you will simply say *Mea culpa*, while striking your breast.

And gathering all his strength he said his entire *Confiteor*.

Then the anointing began, and he answered “Amen.”

³⁰Pierre de Beaumont (cf. VIII, 103, n. 3).

³¹Emerand Bajoue (cf. VII, 165, n. 1).

³²Antoine Maillard (cf. VIII, 125, n. 4).

At each anointing, he made an effort to listen, and he answered "Amen," but in a whisper.

When the sacrament had been administered, he revived a little, and, raising his eyes, looked with a joyous countenance at all who were present.

We asked his blessing for all his children and he replied:

—"It is not for me. . . ."

While trying to speak and to say he was unworthy, he was again overcome by drowsiness and remained seated in that state, with his head resting on a cloth, supported throughout the night by one of our Brothers, Prévost,³³ Survire,³⁴ or Ducournau,³⁵ because his head kept falling forward in his extreme drowsiness.

Toward nine o'clock in the evening, Messieurs Bécu,³⁶ Grimal,³⁷ Boucher,³⁸ and the other senior priests arrived; each said to him, *My heart is ready*, which he repeated.

One final question. Messieurs Dehorgny and Berthe asked his blessing for all his children, friends, and benefactors, to which he responded quite distinctly, "God bless you."

His children, consoled by this blessing, left the room, where all were kneeling; some were praying, but most had their eyes fixed on this kind father.

Every fifteen minutes or so—and sometimes between one *Miserere* and another—M. Gicquel or M. Berthe said to him, *Mother of grace, Mother of mercy*. He repeated, *Mother of grace*, etc.³⁹

He manifested joy in everything, repeating over and over *God, come to my assistance*, etc., and at other times, *Mother of God, remember me*, which he immediately repeated.

³³François Prévost (cf. V, 447, n. 3).

³⁴Nicolas Survire (cf. V, 251, n. 2).

³⁵Bertrand Ducournau (cf. VIII, 94, n. 3).

³⁶Jean Bécu (cf. VIII, 301, n. 3).

³⁷François Grimal (cf. VII, 12, n. 3).

³⁸Léonard Boucher (cf. VIII, 99, n. 2).

³⁹Many of the prayers and responses that follow come from the Divine Office and the prayers for the dying.

Toward eleven o'clock, he became bathed in sweat; immediately his pulse began to drop, and he broke into a cold sweat. Messieurs Berthe, Boucher, Dehorgny, Bécu, and Demonchy ⁴⁰ were summoned, and the recommendations for the soul began. Gicquel called out to him, "Jesus," and he repeated "Jesus." *O God come to my assistance*, etc., and he repeated in a whisper, *O God come to my assistance*.

The chills passed and his pulse quickened a little. He was offered some orange juice and he clenched his teeth.

A little jam was spooned into his mouth, but he rejected it. In an effort to rouse him, Brother Alexandre ⁴¹ blew a little cephalic powder into his nose. This made him sneeze and he had to use the basin. He then fell back into his drowsy state.

M. Dehorgny said to him, *Be merciful*, and he repeated, *Be merciful*.

At a quarter past midnight, Brother Nicolas Survire said to him aloud, "Monsieur."

Hearing this word he awakened and, looking gently at the Brother, said to him, "Well, Brother!" then dozed off again.

At one o'clock, M. Maillart left to celebrate Mass; we told him this and he replied, "Thank you."

At one-thirty, he was asked for a second time to bless his family, and, raising his hand, he responded, "God bless them"; then he said, *He who began the work will bring it to completion*. ⁴²

M. Dehorgny asked his blessing for the Tuesday Conferences and all the clergy who attend, and he replied, "Yes."

—For the Ladies of Charity?

—"Yes."

—For the Foundlings?

—"Yes."

—For the poor persons of the Nom-de-Jésus Hospice?

—"Yes."

—For all our benefactors and friends?

⁴⁰Nicolas Demonchy (cf. VIII, 11, n. 2).

⁴¹Alexandre Véronne, the infirmarian (cf. VIII, 461, n. 2).

⁴²Cf. Phil 1:6. (NAB)

—“Yes.”

At two o'clock, he began to perspire again; he looked very flushed and luminous and then became white as snow.

Too often M. Gicquel said to him, *God come to my assistance*, and rousing himself he said, “That’s enough,” meaning that people were speaking too much to him, and that was distracting him, for he still seemed attentive, although half asleep.

Someone said to him, *I believe in God the Father*, and, kissing his crucifix, he repeated, *I believe*.

I believe in Jesus Christ, and, kissing the crucifix, he replied, *I believe*.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, and he said, *I believe*, etc., and so on for the other articles.

Someone said to him, *I hope, I have hoped in you; I trust in the Lord*, and, kissing his crucifix, he responded cheerfully, *I trust*.

Around three-thirty M. Berthe came near and Gicquel left.

M. Berthe said to him, *Into your hands*, and he repeated, *Into your hands*, etc. *Into your hands*, etc.

Shortly before four o'clock, a pleasant, rosy flush covered his face for the third time, and he looked like he was on fire; then he turned white as snow. Seeing the signs of approaching death, they repeated to him, *God, come to my assistance*, etc., and, making an effort, he repeated—though now unable to close his lips, only barely moving them—*God come to my assistance*, etc.

“Jesus,” they said to him, and he repeated, “Jesus,” in the same manner, moving his lips.

This last attack intensified; at about four-thirty he started to hic-cough, and the death rattle began. This lasted until a quarter to five without any convulsions, signs, or struggle.

Breathing his last, he gave up his beautiful soul to Our Lord and remained in a sitting position as he had been, beautiful and more majestic and venerable than ever to behold.

Fully dressed, he died in his chair by the fireside.

At the same time, in the presence of Messieurs Maillart, Demonchy, Gicquel, Boucher, Grimal, etc., M. Berthe gave Messieurs Bécu and Dehorgny the two keys to the private strongbox.

When the prayers were finished, we withdrew, and Brothers Alexandre, Dubourdieu,⁴³ Lanier, and Survire shrouded him, in the presence of. . . .

His body was then placed on the bed. Six men in surplices on both sides of the bed recited the Office of the Dead throughout the day and night.

The same day, several judges and counselors arrived in tears.

At the obedience all the priests who were not part of the seminary were notified to gather at one o'clock in Saint-Luc infirmary.

At one o'clock M. Berthe began the meeting with about forty priests in attendance. The article of the Constitutions concerning the election of the Vicar-General was read.

The keys were brought in and the strongbox was opened publicly.

The box containing the secret nomination sheet for the Vicar-General was opened.

They acknowledged M. Vincent's signature.

M. Vincent's paper, by which he named M. Alméras as Vicar-General, was read. M. Alméras put forward his inability and infirmities.

Thereupon, a vote of approval was requested. All agreed that he should be the Vicar-General. Distressed, he fell to his knees, saying that he was not only sick but seriously ill. Everyone knelt, but he insisted, repeating that he was helpless and that, according to the Constitution, that was an impediment. At that time another vote was taken to see whether or not his alleged illness should hinder his election.

All agreed that it should not and that he must be held to it. Finally, kneeling, he bowed his head and submitted, concluding with the antiphon and prayer, and gave—or rather implored—the benediction of Our Lord, *May the blessing of Our Lord Jesus Christ come upon us and remain always*, etc.

The news was announced everywhere.

⁴³Jean-Armand Dubourdieu (cf. VII, 186, n. 3).

The simple burial service had been set for Tuesday at nine o'clock, but it began at ten, in the presence of many priests and Abbots, six Bishops, the Prince de Conti, etc.

He was buried below the eagle,⁴⁴ in a lead coffin, which was enclosed in a wooden coffin and a square stone vault.

On the lead coffin a copper plaque was attached, on which the following words were written: *Vincent de Paul, priest, Instituter or Founder and first Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, died on September 27, in the year of Our Lord 1660.* His organs were enclosed in a pewter urn with an iron band around it and placed in the nave, directly beneath the center of the balustrade partition, to the right of the two doors of the balustrade on the side of the nave.

**57a. - OBITUARY OF SAINT VINCENT
AND ACCOUNTS OF HIS MEMORIAL SERVICES
IN THE GAZETTE DE FRANCE**

On the same day (September 27, 1660), Father Vincent de Paul, Superior General and Founder of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, died in his sleep at Saint-Lazare in his eighty-fifth year,¹ after having received the sacraments with the deep piety of which he has so long given testimony. As illustrious monuments to this, he has left nearly thirty houses of the Mission, which he established in various provinces of France, as well as in Rome, Savoy, Genoa, Poland, and as far off as Africa and Madagascar, where he has had the Gospel preached.

The following day, a solemn funeral service was held for him. It was attended by the Prince de Conti, the Nuncio² of His Holiness,

⁴⁴Below the lectern.

Document 57a. - *Annales C. M.* (1961), pp. 493-94, reprinted three items published in 1660 in the *Gazette de France*, relative to the death of Saint Vincent (no. 116, pp. 909-10) and memorial services for him (no. 125, p. 1065, and no. 139, pp. 1119-20).

¹Another indication that at the time of his death it was presumed that Saint Vincent was born in 1576, as Abelly had stated.

²Celio Piccolomini (1656-63).

several Bishops, the Duchess d'Éguillon,³ and a large number of Lords and Ladies who wished to honor his memory, along with the common people, who were there in a large crowd.

(Rethel, October 20, 1660)

On the fifteenth of this month, the Ladies of Charity of this town which had received many benefits from Father Vincent, Superior of all the Missionaries, in the form of food, maintenance, and rehabilitation of the poor people of this town and of the border areas, held a solemn memorial service for him as a sign of their gratitude. All our magistrates attended, along with a large number of members of the nobility.

(November 23, 1660)

On (November) 23, at Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois Church, a solemn memorial service was held for Father Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Priests of the Mission. The Bishop of Le Puy⁴ preached the eulogy with the zeal and piety worthy of the occasion, omitting no trait necessary to fill out the picture he was painting to describe the great, heroic virtues of that holy man.

This received the applause of the whole congregation, especially of the large number of priests and religious who were there to honor the memory of the person to whom they felt obliged for the reform of the entire ecclesiastical Order, to which he devoted himself with all the success one could desire.

³The Duchesse d'Aiguillon.

⁴Henri Cauchon de Maupas du Tour (cf. VIII, 507, n. 3).

**58. - GILBERT CUISSOT¹ TO JEAN DEHORGNY
ON THE VIRTUES OF SAINT VINCENT**

(1661)

Since our departure from Paris, ² I had been intending to tell you, after hearing the remarks being made on the virtues of our late Most Honored Father M. Vincent, what others have perhaps already said and remarked better than I could.

(1) I heard from the late M. Coqueret ³ that, when the blessed Bishop of Geneva ⁴ was alive, he had said that he did not know any man more virtuous than M. Vincent, who still lived and advanced so visibly in every way for nearly forty years after that Prelate.

(2) The late M. de la Salle ⁵ once told us that, one day while he was vesting for Mass, M. Vincent called him and said: "M. de la Salle, the Gospel teaches me that, if, while going to the altar, you know that someone has something against you, leave your gift there, etc." ⁶ Suddenly he left both his vestments and the sacristy to go to find someone in Paris who he knew held something against him without good cause.

(3) One time I accompanied our Most Honored Father to the office of M. Gontier, Counselor in the Parlement, court reporter for the business of payment for the Nom-de-Jésus (after he had already seen M. Olier to get him to present a petition to this court reporter, whom, he told me, he didn't know very well, although he was one of his parishioners and lived very nearby). The Counselor received M. Vincent very coldly, upheld completely the side of the other party and other disputes very contrary to what we were entitled to, as the decree indicated. M. Vincent simply explained our right,

Document 58. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original.

¹Cf. VIII, 36, n. 5.

²He had been in Paris to participate in the General Assembly of 1661, at which René Alméras was chosen as the successor of Saint Vincent.

³Jean Coqueret (cf. VII, 161, n. 2).

⁴Saint Francis de Sales.

⁵Jean de la Salle, whom Saint Vincent called a "great missionary" and whom the Bishop of Beauvais considered the "most gifted speaker" he had ever known (cf. XII, Conference no. 210 of August 5, 1659).

⁶Cf. Mt 5:23-24. (NAB)

talked to him of other things, made no complaint about it, and spoke to me about something else on the way home.

(4) One time I went to M. du Borné's with him, and unable to prevent looking at himself in a large mirror (he was walking around the balcony, while waiting for that gentleman), he exclaimed, railing against himself: "Oh! You big scoundrel!"

(5) At the time of our last Assembly in 1651, he did me the favor of taking me with him in his carriage so he could speak to me in private about what concerned me and the community in Cahors. He had Brother Ducournau take a horse, so we might be alone until we reached Pontoise. He had business with the late Bishop of Paris,⁷ and was following him because His Excellency had left in the morning, and M. Vincent had left after dinner. So, he told me that we should prepare for some mortification, which he did by interior and exterior recollection, approaching and entering Saint-Martin Abbey, as would a child in a family, who was expecting a harsh correction. I waited and did not enter the Bishop's room at that time. He was already in bed, although from there His Excellency had him brought in, eat supper, and given a place to sleep, in keeping with the magnanimity of his family. In addition, he had him welcomed warmly by the servants; after supper, he had him come back by his bed, and I went with him. The conversation of that good Prelate was on indifferent matters and was very cordial.

(6) On this same journey from Paris, since I had been instructed by the late Bishop of Cahors⁸ to tell or inform him whether, in the assembly of certain Prelates and other clergy, there were any less attached to and—I think—more opposed to M. Vincent than the Bishop of Alet,⁹ he began to say to me: "O Monsieur, it is of great importance that those we have served. . . ." Realizing, however, that he was about to unburden his heart to me, he stopped short through that interior mortification and had me talk about something else, saying: "Let's leave that as it is."

⁷Jean-François de Gondi (1623-54).

⁸Alain de Solminihac (cf. VIII, 2, n. 4).

⁹Nicolas Pavillon (cf. VIII, 283, n. 1).

(7) During that three-month stay—or rather before I came to Cahors, which was in 1647—he came to me to make his confession. After it, I learned from him of a grace he shared with blessed Francis de Sales, who, when he was alive, had the gift of curing illnesses and anxieties, some very violent, by laying his hands on a person of exceptional virtue, who could find no other relief for those ailments. They ceased entirely during the imposition of hands, and [the person] was relieved of them entirely for a period of time afterward. The same thing happened during that time by the imposition of hands of our late Most Honored Father (I think he had been the spiritual director of that person since the death of that great Prelate). The humility of M. Vincent lay in his telling me all of the above despite some interior upheaval, with his complete submission to stop doing it if I advised or ordered him not to do so. God did not, by His grace, forsake me to the point of preventing him in the least from it. I told him absolutely to continue that good work.

Addressed: M. Jean Dehorgny, Priest of the Mission, at Saint-Lazare

PART II

DOCUMENTS PERTAINING TO THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

59. - FOUNDATION CONTRACT OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

(April 17, 1625)

Present in person before the undersigned notaries and attorneys of our Sire the King at the Châtelet of Paris were the noble and powerful Lord Messire Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, Comte de Joigny, Marquis des Iles-d'Or, Chevalier of the Orders of His Majesty, Councillor in his councils, Captain of fifty men-at-arms of his guards, his Lieutenant General on the Seas of the Levant, and General of the Galleys of France; together with his wife, the noble and powerful Lady Françoise-Marguerite de Silly, Baronne de Montmirail and other places, etc., authorized by the said Lord her husband for the implementation of this document. They willingly, freely, and voluntarily have unanimously and jointly stated and declared that some years ago God had given them the desire to have Him honored on their own estates and in other places, and they reflected that, since His Divine Goodness has provided in His infinite mercy for the spiritual needs of the inhabitants of the towns of this kingdom through a large number of Doctors and religious, who preach, catechize, and exhort them and preserve them in the spirit of devotion, only the poor people of the rural areas remain, as it were, abandoned.

They thought, therefore, that this situation could be remedied to a certain extent through the pious association of some priests recog-

nized for their knowledge, piety, and ability, who would be willing to renounce the conveniences of the said towns as well as all benefices, offices, and dignities of the Church, so that, in accord with the wishes of the Prelates, each within the limits of his own diocese, they could devote themselves entirely and exclusively to the salvation of the poor common people. They would go from village to village, at the expense of their common purse, to preach, instruct, exhort, and catechize those poor people and encourage all of them to make a good general confession of their whole past life, without accepting for this a remuneration of any kind or manner whatsoever, so as to distribute freely the gifts they have freely received from the generous hand of God.

And to accomplish this, the Lord and Lady, in gratitude for the goods and graces they have received and receive daily from God's Divine Majesty, and to contribute their part to His ardent desire for the salvation of poor souls, to honor the mystery of the Incarnation and the life and death of Jesus Christ, for love of His holy Mother, and also to try to obtain the grace of living the rest of their days so well that they and their family may hope to attain eternal glory, they have resolved to constitute themselves as patrons and founders of this good work. For this purpose the Lord and Lady, by this document, have donated and given as alms and do donate and give as alms the sum of forty-five thousand livres. Of this amount there has now been handed over in cash to Messire Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese and Licentiate in Canon Law, thirty-seven thousand livres, counted and reckoned in the presence of the undersigned notaries, in sixteen teston coins, demi-francs, and douzains,¹ all valid legal tender. With regard to the remaining eight thousand livres, the Lord and Lady have promised and do promise to pay and hand them over to the above-mentioned M. de Paul, in this city of Paris, by one year from today, mortgaging each and every one of their goods now and in the future, in accord with the following clauses and duties:

¹Teston, demi-franc, and douzain are all ancient French units of money.

Namely, that the Lord and Lady have entrusted and do entrust to M. de Paul the authority to elect and choose, between this time and a year from now, six priests, or the number that the income of the present foundation can support, whose knowledge, piety, morals, and integrity of life are known to him, to serve under his direction in this work during his lifetime. This is the express wish and intention of the Lord and Lady because of their confidence in his leadership and the experience he has acquired in the work of the missions, in which God has bestowed great blessings on him until now. Notwithstanding that supervision, the Lord and Lady intend that M. [de] Paul live permanently in their home to continue to provide them and their aforementioned family with the spiritual assistance he has given them for many years;

That the above-mentioned sum of forty-five thousand livres will be spent by M. de Paul, on the advice of the Lord and Lady, on land investments or established revenues, whose profit and income will serve for their maintenance, clothing, food, and other necessities. These investments and income will be managed, controlled, and administered by them, as something of their own;

That, in the event of the death of M. de Paul, in order to carry on the aforesaid work for the greater glory of God and the edification and salvation of the neighbor, those who will have been accepted for the work and persevered in it until then, will elect, by a majority of votes, one among them whom they judge suitable to be their Superior in the place of M. de Paul, and will do the same successively every three years and for such other time that they will judge best, in the case of death intervening;

That the Lord and Lady will remain jointly the founders of the work and, as such, they, their heirs, and their descendants will enjoy in perpetuity the rights and privileges granted and accorded to patrons by the holy Canons, except the right to name persons to office, which they have renounced;

That these priests and others who desire to commit themselves to this holy work, now or in the future, will devote themselves entirely to the care of the aforementioned poor people in the rural areas and, for this purpose, will bind themselves neither to preach nor to ad-

minister any sacrament in towns in which there is an archbishopric, bishopric, or presidial court,² except in the case of very great necessity or to their servants behind closed doors, in the event that they [their servants] retire to a house in any of these towns;

That they will expressly renounce all offices, benefices, and dignities. If, however, it should happen that some Prelate or patron desires to give one of them a parish in order to administer it well, the one who will be presented to him by the Director or Superior may accept and govern it, having previously served in the work for eight to ten years and not otherwise, unless the Superior, on the advice of the Company, should judge it fitting to dispense someone from those eight years of service;

That these priests will live in common under obedience to M. de Paul in the manner mentioned above, and to their Superior in the future after his death, under the name of Company, Congregation, or Confraternity of the Fathers or Priests of the Mission;

That those who will be accepted subsequently for the work will be obliged to have the intention of serving God in it in the above-mentioned manner and to observe the regulations that will be drawn up among them concerning it;

That they will be bound to go once every five years throughout the estates of the Lord and Lady to preach, catechize, and do all the aforesaid good works there. As for the rest of their time, they will use it as they wish in the most useful way possible and in the places they judge most suitable for the glory of God, the conversion and edification of the neighbor, and the spiritual assistance of poor galley convicts, helping them to make good use of their bodily sufferings. In this the above-mentioned General will fulfill what he feels obligated to do, in a certain sense, by his office—the charity toward the galley convicts that he intends to be continued in perpetuity in the future by these priests for good and just reasons;

That they will work in these missions from the beginning of October until the month of June, in such a way that, after having served for a month or so in the said Company, they will return for two

²A royal court established in the sixteenth century to relieve the pressure of appeals to the Parlements. In certain cases it also served as a court of first instance.

weeks to their common residence or to another place assigned them by their Superior, as the case may require. In one of those places they will spend the first three or four days of the aforesaid two weeks in recollection or a spiritual retreat and will use the rest to prepare the subjects they will have to treat during the next mission, to which they will return immediately;

And, since the months of June, July, August, and September are unsuitable for the mission because the country people are too busy at that time with manual labor, the aforementioned Fathers will use their time to teach catechism in the villages on Sundays and feast days, to help the Pastors who ask for them, and to study so as to become more capable later on of assisting their neighbor for the glory of God.

For this is how everything was stated and agreed upon among the parties, promising, obliging, each one to what he is entitled, even the Lord and Lady, for the fulfillment of this document, jointly and severally, one for the other and each one alone and for everything, with no division or discussion, the Lord and Lady relinquishing any division, legal order of discussion, and form of security to the said benefice.

Drawn up and signed on the afternoon of April 17, 1625, in the town house of the Lord and Lady on rue Pavée, Saint-Sauveur parish, in Paris, the official record of this document having remained with Le Boucher, one of the undersigned notaries.³

P. E. DE GONDY

FRANÇOISE-MARGUERITE DE SILLY

VINCENT DEPAUL

DUPUYS LE BOUCHER⁴

³This contract was subsequently modified by Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondy, under date of April 17, 1627 (cf. Doc. 61a.).

⁴Jean Dupuys and Nicolas Le Boucher were Parisian notaries.

**60. - APPROVAL OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION
BY THE ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS**

(April 24, 1626)

Jean-François de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See, Councillor of the King in his Councils of State and for his Privy Council, and Grand Master of his chapel, to all those who will read this document, greetings.

We make known that, having seen the foundation contract signed before Jean Dupuys and Nicolas Le Boucher, notaries and attorneys of the King at his Châtelet of Paris, on April 17, 1625, by our very dear brother Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, Comte de Joigny, Marquis des Iles-d'Or, Chevalier of the Orders of His Majesty, Councillor in his councils, Lieutenant General on the Seas of the Levant and General of the Galleys of France, together with his late wife, our very dear sister Lady Françoise-Marguerite de Silly,¹ Baronne de Montmirail, etc., [concerning]² some priests who are serving in the missions, catechizing, preaching, and encouraging the poor country people to make general confessions, we, the above-mentioned Archbishop of Paris, received, praised, and approved the foundation contract, as, by this document, we receive, praise, and approve it, giving our consent for these priests to be established and remain in this city of Paris, on condition that they will give missions in our diocese only in the places we assign to them and after having received our blessing or that of our Vicars-General, and that, on their return, they will give us an account of what they will have done on those missions.

Given in Paris, April 24, 1626, under the seal of our chancery and the signature of the Regular Secretary of our archdiocese.

Signed by the [Most] Illustrious and [Most] Re[verend] Archbishop of Paris.

BAUDOUYN

Document 60. - Arch. Nat., M 209, original.

¹She had died on June 23, 1625.

²The original had *fait* [made].

**60a. - UNION OF THE COLLÈGE DES BONS-ENFANTS
TO THE MISSION**

(July 20, 1626)

Jean-François de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See, Councillor of the Most Christian Lord our King in his Councils of State and for Sacred Affairs, and Grand Master of the royal chapel, to all who will read the present document, greetings in the Lord.

We make it known that, on Wednesday, this past June 17, having seen the letters of power of attorney issued in the presence of Maître Thomas Gallot, Licentiate in Law and sworn public notary by apostolic authority and the authority of our archdiocesan Curia of Paris, by Maître Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese, Licentiate in Canon Law, Principal and chaplain of the principalship and chapel of the house or collège called in the vernacular the Bons-Enfants, adjoining the Porte Saint-Victor but within the walls of Paris, and founded in the University of Paris; upon resignation of the principalship and chapel of the Collège des Bons-Enfants (on whose fruits, income, and proceeds, by apostolic authority and in virtue of the resignation, an annual pension for life of two hundred livres *tournois* has been assigned, created, and constituted for Maître Louis de Guyard, Doctor of theology, Protonotary of the Holy Apostolic See, recently Principal and chaplain of the collège, together with all the rights and appurtenances) into our hands, as the ordinary collator of the principalship and chapel, resigning, ceding, and releasing them purely, freely, and simply for the purpose of the union, annexation, and incorporation of the principalship and chapel of the Collège des Bons-Enfants with the Society or Community of the Priests of the Mission, founded by our own brother, the Most Illustrious and Most Excellent Lord Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, Comte de Joigny, Marquis des Iles-d'Or, Chevalier of both Royal Orders, and by his wife, Lady Françoise-Marguerite de Silly, Baronne de Montmirail, in accord with the contract signed by them in the pres-

ence of Maîtres Nicolas [Le] Boucher and Jean Dupuys, royal notaries at the Châtelet of Paris, on April 17 of last year, 1625; having seen also the contract of foundation signed as mentioned above, with our decree of ratification of the contract of foundation affixed to it, with the date of this past April 24, and signed: *By proxy for the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Archbishop of Paris*, Baudouyn, Promoter of our Curia (to whom everything was communicated by our order); having seen also and carefully considered the conclusions and all that had to be seen and considered; we, the aforesaid Archbishop of Paris, bearing in mind the extraordinary spiritual fruit produced by the Fathers of the Mission in years past and until now in our diocese of Paris, and which is still being produced daily and is hoped to be produced in the future, have conferred and bestowed, and do confer and bestow, with all its rights and appurtenances, the principalship and chapel of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, vacant as has been stated, on the Society or Community of Priests of the Mission, founded as explained above, and have united, annexed, and incorporated, and do unite, annex, and incorporate by the present document the same principalship and chapel to the Society of the Priests of the Mission in perpetuity, with the obligation, however, and on condition that the Superior of the Priests of the Mission in office at the particular time or, in his absence, his substitute Principal and chaplain, will say and celebrate, or have said and celebrated, the Masses and other divine offices which are usually said and celebrated by the Principal and chaplain of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, and to which he is obliged by the foundation of the principalship and chapel, and to observe and carry out each and every other article contained in the earlier foundation clauses, as well as those concerning the two foundation scholars of the collège, which the late priest, Jean Pluyette, of happy memory, Principal of the same collège in his lifetime, founded and instituted in his testament of July 22, 1579,¹ with the obligation also of an annual pension of two hun-

¹There seems to be a discrepancy with regard to the year 1579 stated in *Annales*. Coste gives 1479; according to him, in the fifteenth century Jean Pluyette, Principal of the Collège des Bons Enfants, established and funded two scholarships for the collège to be given to members of the Pluyette family or, lacking eligible family members, to inhabitants of Mesnil-Aubry and Fontenay-en-France. (Cf. Ch. Pluyette, *Un recteur de l'Université de Paris au XV^e siècle, Jehan*

dred livres *tournois*, created and constituted by apostolic authority, to be paid to the same Louis de Guyard in the manner, place, and terms contained and expressed by the Apostolic Signatura in the creation and declaration of the annual pension, and not otherwise.

Accordingly, in virtue of the present document, we command all priests and notaries subject to us to place and introduce [and introduce]² the Society or Community of Priests of the Mission or their Superior, in the name of the whole Community and for him, into the corporal, real, and actual possession of the principalship of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, now vacant, as has been said, of all their rights and appurtenances, or another one of them so requested, to place and introduce (as customary), with the usual ceremonies, while safeguarding the right of anyone else.

In confirmation and witness of the foregoing we have ordered Maître Jean Baudouyn, Licentiate in Canon Law, sworn public notary by apostolic authority and the authority of our archdiocesan Curia, and Regular Secretary of our archdiocese of Paris, to have the present document drawn up and signed, and the seal of our chancery affixed to it.

Given in Paris, July 20, 1626, in the presence of Pierre Heudebert, priest of our church of Paris and Vicar-General in perpetuity, and Guillaume Thomas, Associate Canon of the church of Paris, witnesses.

J. FRANÇOIS], *Arch[bishop] of Paris*

By proxy for the aforesaid Most Illustrious and Reverend Archbishop of Paris.

BAUDOUYN

Pluyette et les fondations qu'il institua, notice biographique et historique [Paris, 1900].) Until 1789 the Pluyette Foundation provided for fifty-two scholars, of whom forty-one bore the name Pluyette.

When Vincent de Paul took possession of the Collège des Bons-Enfants (1625), part of the revenue allocated for his maintenance and that of his Missionaries also had to support the two Pluyette scholars. Because of the impossibility of maintaining the entire value of the fund, however, Saint Vincent did not provide fully for Mathieu Pluyette and his cousin Denis. The collège supplied lodgings for foundation recipients and other boarders until 1639.

²This phrase is repeated in the original.

61. - ACT OF ASSOCIATION OF THE FIRST MISSIONARIES

(September 4, 1626)

We, Vincent de Paul, priest and Principal of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, founded in Paris and adjoining the Porte Saint-Victor, testify to whom it may concern that, in accord with the foundation made by Lord Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, Comte de Joigny, General of the Galleys of France, and by his late wife, Lady Françoise-Marguerite de Silly, Baronne de Montmirail and of other places, for the maintenance of some priests who commit themselves and come together to devote themselves, by way of the mission, to catechize, preach, and exhort poor country people to make a general confession, in line with what is stated in the foundation contract signed before Jean Dupuys and Nicolas Le Boucher, notaries and attorneys of the King, at the Châtelet of Paris on April 17, 1625; the foundation approved and authorized by the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Jean-François de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris, on April 24, 1626; by which contract authority is given us to select those priests whom we find suitable to serve in this good work.

In virtue of the above, after having seen proof, for a considerable period of time, of the virtue and ability of François du Coudray,¹ priest of the Amiens diocese, of Maître Antoine Portail, priest of the Arles diocese, and of Maître Jean de la Salle, also a priest of the Amiens diocese, we have chosen, elected, aggregated, and associated, and do choose, elect, aggregate, and associate to ourselves and to the aforesaid work, to live together as a Congregation, Company, or Confraternity, and to devote ourselves to the salvation of the poor country people, in conformity with the foundation and in accord with the request that du Coudray, Portail, and La Salle have made to us, promising to observe the foundation and the special regulations that will be drawn up in accord with it, and to obey us and our successors in the office of Superior, as being subject to our direction, leadership,

Document 61. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original, in M. du Coudray's handwriting.

¹François du Coudray (cf. III, 31, n. 3).

and jurisdiction. We, the aforesaid du Coudray, Portail, and de la Salle accept, promise, and bind ourselves to observe this inviolably.

In witness whereof we have each signed these letters in our own hand and have had them certified by the notaries.

Drawn up in Paris, at the Collège des Bons-Enfants, September 4, 1626.

VINCENT DEPAUL F. DU COUDRAY
J. DE LA SALLE

A. PORTAIL

Today, on the date of this document, Maître Vincent de Paul, Royal Chaplain of the Galleys of France and Principal of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, founded in the University of Paris and adjoining the Porte Saint-Victor, living there, on the one hand; and on the other, Maîtres François du Coudray, priest of the Amiens diocese; Antoine Portail, priest of the Arles diocese; and Jean de la Salle, also a priest of the Amiens diocese, have appeared before the undersigned notaries and attorneys of our Sire the King at the Châtelet of Paris. These parties have admitted and publicly acknowledged having written—that is, du Coudray and they with him—and signed in their own handwriting with the signature they are accustomed to use in their business affairs, the agreement written above, by which they promise, each for his own part, to maintain and carry out, point for point, according to its form and terms, without contravening it in any sort and manner whatsoever, promising, obliging, and renouncing.

Drawn up and signed in the office before noon on September 4, 1626:

VINCENT DEPAUL
DE LA SALLE

DU COUDRAY PORTAIL,
SAULNIER CHARLES

**61a. - MODIFICATION OF THE FOUNDATION CONTRACT
OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION**

(Saturday, April 17, 1627)

Before the undersigned notaries and attorneys of our Sire the King at his Châtelet of Paris, were present in person Messires Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, Comte de Joigny, of the Oratory of Jesus, now present in their house situated in the faubourg Saint-Jacques, in the place called Saint-Magloire, in his own name and as legitimate guardian of François-Paul de Gondi his son, Comendatory Abbot of the Abbeys of Notre-Dame de Buzay and Sainte-Croix de Quimperlé; and the eldest son of the Comte de Joigny, the noble and powerful Lord, Messire Pierre de Gondi, Lieutenant General for the King on the Seas of the Levant, and General of the Galleys of France, now present in his mansion situated on rue du Boulloir, Saint-Eustache parish, in this city of Paris. The Comte de Joigny and the General of the Galleys, of their own pleasure and free will, have stated and declared that, after careful consideration of the work of the missions, of which the Comte was the founder, together with his late wife, the noble and powerful Lady Françoise-Marguerite de Silly, Baronne de Montmirail and of other places, by a contract of April 17, 1625, certified by the undersigned notaries, they see that hereinafter some difficulty may arise among the priests who are devoting themselves, and may devote and apply themselves henceforth to the missions, under pretext of certain non-essential clauses which, inadvertently or otherwise, may have been inserted into the above-mentioned foundation contract, even because of the short time the Lord and Lady then had—the Lady because of the illness by which God took her from this world shortly

Document 61a. - Arch. Nat., *Minutier Central*, Eb/LXXVIII/225, original. A photocopy of this document was found among the papers of the late André Dodin, C.M. (d. March 19, 1997), who had received it from Jean-Charles Niclas, graduate of the École des Chartes in Paris and Director of the Sablé (Sarthe) branch of the Bibliothèque Nationale. The first foundation contract (cf. Doc. 59) was modified by Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, who had joined the Oratory, to free M. Vincent from certain stipulations which were limiting his field of action. Apparently, the existence of the present modified document was unknown until now. Although the changes from the contract of April 17, 1625, are minor, this text is nonetheless important.

after, and the Comte because he was in a great hurry to carry out his aforementioned duty.

Desiring to provide and find a solution for this for the future, by this document they have withdrawn and waived, and do withdraw and waive, for themselves and for their successors, all clauses set forth in the contract concerning the time the Priests of the Mission must work in the villages for the spiritual instruction of the poor people, and other things which concern only their manner of life, retreat, and personal conduct, being satisfied that the priests fulfill the fundamental clauses of the foundation, namely, to devote themselves only to the salvation of the above-mentioned poor country people, going every five years throughout the estates of the Lords and Lady to carry out the functions of their Institute there, and, as far as depends on them, to take care of the salvation of poor criminals condemned to punishment on the galleys. The said Lords remit all the other clauses contained in the foundation contract mentioned above, even what concerns the election of Superiors, leaving this to the Regulations or Constitutions that will be made and drawn up by the priest Maître Vincent de Paul, Licentiate in Canon Law, Superior of the work, in whom this Lord has full and entire confidence in this matter, having been acquainted for a long time¹ with his prudence, ability, discretion, zeal, and piety for the glory of God and the salvation of the neighbor. The aforesaid Lords ratified, authorized, and approved at that time, and do hereby ratify, authenticate, and approve those Regulations and Constitutions to be drawn up by M. de Paul the Superior, for them and their successors, as the need may arise, wishing them to have their full and entire effect. Renouncing, etc., ordaining, etc.

Drawn up and signed by the Comte in the house of the Oratory, and by the aforesaid General in his home, on the afternoon of April 17, 1627:

PHILIPPE EMMANUEL DE GONDY
PIERRE DE GONDY
DUPUYS
LE BOUCHER

¹ Vincent de Paul had been the tutor of Jean-François-Paul de Gondy, future Archbishop of Paris and Cardinal de Retz, and his older brother Pierre de Gondy, the future Duc de Retz.

**62. - ROYAL LETTERS PATENT FOR THE APPROVAL
OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION**

(May 1627)

Louis, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, to all present, now and in the future, greetings.

Our beloved and loyal Councillor in our councils and Chevalier of our Orders, Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, Comte de Joigny, our Lieutenant General on the Seas of the Levant, and General of the Galleys of France, has made known to us and pointed out that his late wife, Lady Françoise-Marguerite de Silly, moved by charity toward the poor common people, having noticed for several years that persons living in the cities were being assisted spiritually by a number of knowledgeable persons of notable piety, while the poor country people alone remained deprived of this consolation and assistance, donated the sum of forty-five thousand livres in alms in order to remedy this in some way. This money is to be invested, and the revenue accruing from it allocated and earmarked, by way of a foundation, for food and maintenance for certain priests of proven learning, piety, and ability. Gathered together and living a common life, after having previously renounced the conditions and employment of the cities, they will devote themselves entirely and unreservedly to the spiritual instruction of the poor persons, going, with the consent of the Prelates of our kingdom, each within the limits of his diocese, to preach, hear confessions, exhort, and catechize these poor village people, accepting no remuneration of any kind or manner whatsoever. He humbly entreats us to have the foundation accepted.

For these reasons, having only praise for works of such piety and charity, and duly informed of the great results the priests have already produced in all the places where they have been on mission, both in the Paris diocese and elsewhere, and desiring on this occasion to reward and treat the General favorably, we make known that, by our special favors, full power, and royal authority, accept-

ing, authorizing, and confirming the foundation, whose contract is attached under the counterseal of our chancery, we have allowed the aforesaid priests, and do allow them, by this document, signed by our own hand, to form this Congregation and Association in order to live in common and, with the consent of the Prelates, to perform the works of charity, with the responsibility of praying for us and our successors, and also for the peace and tranquillity of the Church and the State. To this end, we forbid anyone of any rank and social standing whatsoever to trouble or prevent the priests living in common from the exercise of their duties and from residing wherever they desire in our kingdom. We will, furthermore, that they be able and free to accept and receive any legacies and alms that may hereafter be left to them, so that by means of these they may more easily assure the free instruction of our poor subjects.

We order our beloved and loyal Councillors, those holding positions in the Parlement, Bailiffs, Seneschals, Provosts, or their Lieutenants, and our other dispensers of justice, officers and subjects, to allow the priests of the Society and Congregation to benefit from the effect of these letters, and to keep and observe them inviolably, putting an end to any trouble that might hinder their effect; for such is our pleasure. And so that this may be definite and established forever, we have had our seal affixed to these aforesaid letters.

Given in Paris, in the month of May, in the year of grace 1627 and the seventeenth year of our reign.

LOUIS

In the name of the King.

DE LOMÉNIE¹

¹Henri-Auguste de Loménie (cf. VII, 106, n. 3).

**62a. - FIRST PETITION TO URBAN VIII FOR APPROVAL
OF THE MISSION**

[1627]

Most Holy Father,

Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, Comte de Joigny, General of the Galleys of France, and his wife Françoise-Marguerite de Silly, of happy memory, arranged several years ago that certain priests, zealous for the salvation of souls, should go to give missions in the rural areas for the conversion of heretics, the instruction of the faithful, and the conversion of sinners, with the permission of the local Ordinaries. Having learned of the great benefit resulting from this, and so that such a holy and fruitful work could be perpetuated, they have given more than twenty thousand gold écus from their possessions to provide those priests with the means and possibility of carrying out this holy exercise and not burden the Pastors and parishes or places to which they will be sent; and because they know the zeal, prudence, learning, and ability for the missions of Reverend Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese, they have willed that the care and administration of the income from the sum of twenty thousand gold écus be entrusted to him to be distributed to the Missionaries according to their need. For two years now this has been done most successfully by the said Vincent, supporting the missionary priests, and more, at times. They have already been in the dioceses of Sens, Paris, Chartres, Soissons, Amiens, and Châlons with remarkable usefulness and edification of the people.

And so that the missions might be given more successfully, Blaise Le Féron, a priest of the Sorbonne and one of the Missionaries,¹ present in the Curia, humbly petitions Your Holiness, in the name of the said Vincent and his companions, to bestow on him his

Document 62a. - Archives of Propaganda Fide, Rome, *Scritture Originali Riferite nelle Congregazioni Generali* (hereafter referred to as *SOCC*) 387, fol. 370, original unsigned document, written in Italian. Blaise Le Féron presented this supplication on behalf of Saint Vincent (June 5, 1627); it was printed in *Annali della Missione* (1972), 3-4, pp. 225-26.

¹Although Le Féron was a collaborator in the work of the missions, he was not one of the original members of the Congregation of the Mission.

holy blessing and the customary faculties granted to missionaries, to be used with the permission of the Ordinaries, and not otherwise.

The foundress obliged them to carry out the exercises of their mission once every five years on her estates and those of her husband, leaving them free for the rest of the time to go where the Administrator and Director of the Mission will send them, and all of this has been accepted by the Archbishop of Paris.

**62b. - MINUTES OF THE SESSION AT WHICH PROPAGANDA FIDE
CONSIDERED APPROVAL OF THE MISSION¹**

Congregation 76, June 5, 1627

13. Blaise [Le] Féron, a French Doctor of the Sorbonne, petitions that the Mission of a certain number of priests under the direction of M. Vincent from Dax, which supports itself from the income amounting to twenty thousand gold écus received from the estates in Champagne of the Comtesse, wife of Philippe-Emmanuel, Comte de Joigny, be confirmed. He likewise requests, for M. Vincent and his companions, the customary faculties granted to missionaries so that, by means of them and in accord with the intention of the testatrix, they may be able to devote themselves to the conversion of heretics, instructing the ignorant in the mysteries of faith and Christian commandments, guiding sinners on the right path in the town and in Champagne first of all, and then in other dioceses of France, with, however, the consent of the Ordinaries.

The Sacred Congregation has ordered that a letter be written to the Nuncio to France asking that he make inquiries concerning the suitability of the said Vincent for directing the Mission, the ability of his companions to take on the work of missionaries, and, lastly, the objections and obstacles the local Ordinaries or others may

Document 62b. - Congregation of Propaganda Fide, *Acta*, vol. 4 (1626-27), fol. 231, written in Latin; printed in *Annali della Missione* (1972), 3-4, pp. 234-35.

¹Present at this session were Cardinals Ottavio Bandini, Melchior Klesl, Ludovico Ludovisio, Lorenzo Magalotti, and Guido Bentivoglio, who had been Nuncio to France (1616-21). The Secretary for the Congregation was Bishop Francesco Ingoli.

present against this kind of mission, and that the information so gathered be transmitted to Rome in due time.

**63. - ACT OF UNION OF THE COLLÈGE DES BONS-ENFANTS
TO THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION**

(June 8, 1627)

Jean-François de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See, Councillor of our Lord the King in his Councils of State and for Sacred Affairs, and Grand Master of the royal chapel, to all who will read this document, greetings in the Lord.

We make it known that, having seen the petition of Maître Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese, Licentiate in Canon Law, Principal and chaplain of the principalship and chapel of the house or collège called in the vernacular the Bons-Enfants, adjoining the Porte Saint-Victor, founded previously in the University of Paris, submitted and presented to us for the purpose of union, annexation, and incorporation of the aforesaid principalship or office of the Principal and master, and of the chapel of the same Collège des Bons-Enfants, together with all the rights, appurtenances, and income of the same principalship and chapel, by means of a pure, free, and simple cessation of the principalship and chapel by the aforesaid de Paul, Principal of the collège, or by his legitimate proxy appointed for that purpose, a cessation is made or is to be made into our hands as the ordinary collator for the benefit of the Society or Community of the Priests of the Mission, founded by our own brother, the Most Illustrious and Excellent Lord Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, Chevalier of both Orders, Comte de Joigny, Marquis des Iles d'Or, and his wife, Lady Françoise-Marguerite de Silly, Baronne de Montmirail, in accord with the contract signed by them in the presence of Maîtres . . . , royal notaries at the Châtelet of Paris on April 17, 1625.

We have examined the foundation contract entered into as stated above; the decree of authenticity of the foundation contract showing our approval and ratification of April 24, 1626, signed by J. Baudouyn; the conclusions taken by the Promoter named for this purpose; our order affixed to the bottom of the aforesaid petition, in virtue of which Maître Denis Leblanc, our Vicar-General, Canon of our church of Paris, and Archdeacon of Brie, commissioned and deputed for the purpose, went to the places and, after making a thorough visitation of them, set down the information and investigations for and against the requested union with and incorporation into the Society and Community. We have seen also the report our Vicar-General made of the aforesaid visit, drawn up in the presence of the Promoter of our Curia; the information or investigations for and against the requested union, duly collected and presented by our authority; numerous testimonies concerning the disuse and the former discontinuance of the school in that same collège and the obsolete and dangerous state of the individual buildings, as communicated to us on our order by the Promoter or Adjudicator of cases of our Curia; and lastly, all the conclusions, individual letters, Acts, and documents concerning this matter.

Because from the foregoing it was clear enough, and is more than clear enough, that the union, incorporation, and annexation of the principalship and chapel of the Collège des Bons-Enfants to the Society or Community of the Priests of the Mission would result in an obvious benefit to the Church, given the urgent need of the matter in question and, in accord with the law, for the greater glory of God, the benefit to the whole Church, and the even greater good of the Christian commonwealth, but most of all for the very great benefit to this diocese; taking also into account the special, salutary, increased results produced by the Priests of the Mission in years past; their many fatigues and labors for the salvation of the souls of the faithful; their incredible, assiduous care in the relief and consolation of the whole Christian commonwealth, but especially for this diocese, through their frequent visits to the villages and towns of various provinces of this kingdom to catechize and instruct the ignorant and assuage the consciences of the common people by means of holy confession; to-

gether with the numerous other pious, charitable, and religious works they do and perform and will do and perform (as is hoped) in the future; we, the aforesaid Archbishop of Paris, having seen carefully and examined closely everything that had to be seen and examined in the case, and finding the aforesaid principalship or office of Principal and the chapel or chaplaincy of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, founded in the University of Paris, in accord with the conferral, provision, or any other disposition under our authority by reason of our dignity of Archbishop of Paris, existing in full right but now vacant by the resignation into our hands of Maître Vincent de Paul, their last Principal and chaplain and peaceful possessor, by his proxy Maître Pierre de Glanderon, priest, Canon of Saint-Denis de Passy in the Paris diocese, especially appointed by him for this matter, a resignation made purely, freely, and simply, and accepted by us; we have conferred and donated, and do confer and donate, them to the Society and Community of the Priests of the Mission. By this document we have provided, and do hereby provide them, by our ordinary archdiocesan authority, with all their rights and appurtenances, and have united, annexed, and incorporated, and do unite, annex, and incorporate in perpetuity and forever the principalship and chapel, vacant as explained above, to the Society and Community of the Priests of the Mission, in such a manner that the aforesaid request and petition fully and in every respect may obtain its effect. It carries the obligation, however, that the Fathers of the Mission shall henceforth celebrate, or have celebrated, the Masses and Divine Offices, and carry out all other customary matters specified from ancient times by the foundations of the same collège, especially those contained and prescribed in the foundation of the two foundation scholars of the collège and in the testament of the late priest Jean Pluyette, of happy memory, Principal in his lifetime of the same collège. Likewise, it is provided on condition of paying an annual pension of two hundred livres *tournois*, created by apostolic authority and constituted and assigned from each and every one of the fruits, rights, incomes, revenues, and proceeds of the principalship and chapel to be paid to Maître Louis de Guyard, Doctor of theology, Protonotary of the Holy Apostolic See, as long as he lives, according

to the manner, place, and terms contained and expressed by the Apostolic Signatura of the creation of such a pension.

Finally, they will be obliged to foster, defend, and observe exactly, perfectly, and inviolably each and every thing established for the greater glory of God and the dignity and honor of the Church, according to the prescriptions of the foundation, creation, and institution of the collège, along with the work of the Mission of fostering, safeguarding, observing, and carrying them out exactly and inviolably as pious and religious men ought, are accustomed, and are obliged to do, and not otherwise.

This we have stated and ordained, and do state and ordain by this document, as long as the Community or Society of the Priests of the Mission perdures and remains united in the work of such a Mission, entrusting the principal care, management, and direction of the office of the principalship and chapel of the frequently mentioned Collège des Bons-Enfants to the Superior of the Society and Congregation or Community and house of the Priests of the Mission.

Accordingly, in virtue of the present letters, we order the first priest or apostolic notary destined for this purpose to place and introduce the aforesaid priests of the same Society of the Mission into the corporal, real, and actual possession of the aforesaid principalship and chapel, with all their rights and appurtenances; or, as is customary, that someone else, designated for this, place and introduce in the person of the Superior of the Congregation or Society of the Mission or his proxy, in his name and in place of him, the usual ceremonies being observed and the rights of everyone else safeguarded.

In confirmation and witness of the foregoing we have given order, and do give order, by apostolic authority and the authority of the venerable archdiocesan Curia of Paris, to Maître Jean Baudouyn, Licentiate in Canon Law, sworn public notary and Regular Secretary of our archdiocese of Paris, to write and sign these letters, and we make them and order them to be authenticated by sealing them with the attached seal of our chancery.

Given in Paris on June 8, 1627, in our Council, in the presence in the same place of Maîtres Pierre Heudebert and Guillaume

Thomas, benefice holders in our church of Paris, witnesses called and requested for the purpose.

By proxy for my aforesaid Most Illustrious and Reverend Lord, the Archbishop of Paris.

BAUDOUYN

63a. - REQUEST TO THE NUNCIO TO FRANCE¹

The enclosed decree being sent to Y[our] L[ordship] from this Sacred Congregation concerns the affair of the Mission to be founded under the direction of M. Vincent de Paul, a priest of Dax, with the income from twenty thousand gold écus donated by the Comtesse de Joigny, so that you may make inquiries regarding what is asserted in this decree, and then notify the same Sacred Congregation of this in due time, etc. . . .

Rome, June 11, 1627

**64. - TAKING POSSESSION OF THE COLLÈGE DES BONS-ENFANTS
IN THE NAME OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION**

(July 15, 1627)

On July 15, 1627, I the undersigned, Pierre Legay, duly registered sworn public notary by apostolic authority and the authority of the archdiocesan Curia of Paris, residing in Paris in the new district of the Blessed Virgin Mary, by the power and in virtue of certain letters of conferral, provision and union, annexation, and incorporation of the principalship and chapel of the house or collège called in the vernacular the Bons-Enfants, adjoining the Porte Saint-Victor, previously founded in the University of Paris by the Most Illustrious and Rever-

Document 63a. - Vatican Archives, *Lettere volgari della S.C. de Propaganda Fide*, vol. 6, (1627), fol. 82, written in Italian; printed in *Annali della Missione* (1972), 3-4, pp. 236-37.

¹Giovanni Francesco Guidi di Bagno (cf. VIII, 109, n. 2).

Document 64. - Arch. Nat., M 105, copy, written in Latin. Antoine Portail had already taken possession of the Collège des Bons-Enfants in the name of Vincent de Paul on March 6, 1624 (cf. Doc. 25b).

end Bishop of Paris, made and granted to the Society or Community of the Priests of the Mission, dated this past June 8, signed by Baudouyn, by proxy for the Most Illustrious and Reverend Archbishop of Paris, and duly sealed, placed and introduced in God's name the Priests of the Society of the Mission into the corporal, real, and actual possession of the principalship and chapel of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, with all their rights and appurtenances, in the person of the venerable Maître Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese, Licentiate in Canon Law, Superior of the Congregation or Society of the Mission, in the presence and with the assistance of Maîtres François [du] Coudray, Jean de la Salle, Jean Bécu and Antoine Lucas, priests of the same Society. I did so by their free entrance into the same house or collège and its places and chapel by their taking holy water, reciting prayers to God while kneeling before the altar of the chapel, kissing its altar, ringing the little bell found in the same house, and displaying and showing the aforesaid letters of conferral and union and other ceremonies customary on such occasions. Lastly, so that no one may claim any excuse of ignorance regarding this entering into possession of these rights, I published and made it known, in accord with the royal edict, in a loud and intelligible voice to all those present, and no one, when asked, protested or contradicted it.

The same M. Vincent de Paul, Superior of the Society of the Priests of the Mission requested from me, the undersigned notary, that one or several copies of the Act or public document concerning the foregoing be drawn up and given to him.

These Acts were drawn up in the aforesaid collège and chapel about eight o'clock in the morning, in the presence of Messrs François [du] Coudray, Jean de la Salle, Jean Bécu, and Antoine Lucas; the layman Jean Jourdain;¹ Jacques Regnier,² seminarian of the Amiens diocese, residing in the same collège; and other witnesses.

LEGAY,
the aforesaid notary

¹Brother Jean Jourdain (cf. VI, 274, n. 3).

²Jacques Régnier (cf. I, 45, n. 12).

**65. - ROYAL LETTERS PATENT FOR THE UNION
OF THE COLLÈGE DES BONS-ENFANTS TO THE MISSION**

(September 15, 1627)

Louis, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, to our beloved and loyal Councillors of our court at the Parlement of Paris, the Provost of the aforementioned place, his Lieutenant, and our other dispensers of justice and officers whom it may concern, greetings.

Our beloved Priests of the Mission were founded in our kingdom on April 17, 1625, by our authority and with our consent, by the Comte de Joigny, Chevalier of our Orders, our Lieutenant General on the Seas of the Levant, and General of the Galleys of France, and his late wife, Lady Françoise-Marguerite de Silly, Baronne de Montmirail, to go from village to village to preach, hear confessions, instruct, and catechize free of charge the poor country people. They [the Congregation of the Mission] have informed us and pointed out that, since the Archbishop of Paris united, annexed, and incorporated to their Community in perpetuity, by an Act of last June 8, the residence, principalship, and chapel of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, adjoining the Porte Saint-Victor, situated in our fine city of Paris, upon the resignation which had been made of them into his hands by Messire Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese, Licentiate in Canon Law, last title holder and peaceful possessor of the collège and chapel, they had taken possession of them by another Act of the following July 15, requesting that we grant them our letters necessary for this, for the guarantee and validity of the matter.

For these reasons, after having seen in our council the Acts of Union and Taking Possession attached to it under the counterseal of our chancery, and duly informed of the charity that those Priests of the Mission practice daily for the consolation and salvation of the souls of our poor subjects, we, by our special favor, full power, and royal authority, praised, accepted, confirmed, and approved, and do

praise, accept, confirm, and approve by these letters, signed by our own hand, the union of the principalship and chapel of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, made on behalf of the Priests of the Mission, provided, however, that the collège will remain subject to and dependent on the Rector of the University of the place¹ in the same form and manner that it was formerly, as are all the other collèges of the University, and that the Priests of the Mission will be bound to observe and maintain all the responsibilities stated in the foundations of the collège and chapel. It is our will, and it pleases us that the Priests of the Mission and their successors enjoy these in perpetuity, together with the houses, rights, honors, privileges, income, and revenues belonging to them and dependent on them, for as long as they will devote themselves to the work of the missions.

Today, we command you and ordain by these letters that you have the Acts of Union and Taking Possession registered in the clerk's office of our court, so that the Priests of the Mission may enjoy and have full use, peacefully and forever, of what is contained in them, neither permitting nor tolerating any disturbance or hindrance contrary to this, for such is our pleasure. And in order that this decision be established forever, we have ordered our seal to be affixed to these present letters.

Given at Saint-Germain-en-Laye on September 15, in the year of grace 1627 and the eighteenth year of our reign.

LOUIS

In the name of the King
LE BEAUCLERC

¹University of Paris.

**65a. - REPLY OF THE NUNCIO¹ TO PROPAGANDA FIDE
CONCERNING THE SUITABILITY OF SAINT VINCENT
TO DIRECT THE MISSION**

To my [Most] Ill[ustrious] Lor[dsh]ip and [Most] Est[ee]med
P[ro]tec[tor]

I have received the information Y[our Most] Ill[ustrious] L[or]dsh[ip] had ordered me to obtain with regard to the contents of a decree of the Sacred Congregation of June 5 of this year, concerning the Mission² to be established under the direction of M. Vincent de Paul, a priest of Dax, with the income from the donation made for this purpose by the late Comtesse de Joigny, of which I am sending you the authenticated attached copy.

From the report given me by some very trustworthy persons, and from my personal investigation of the suitability of M. Vincent and the eight companions who live in community with him, I can affirm that they will be warmly welcomed in many dioceses of France and that this kingdom can expect excellent results from their labors. I think this is sufficient to make it easier for Y[our Most] Ill[ustrious] L[or]dsh[ip] to grant the favor that has been requested of you by the aforementioned.

With that, I most humbly kiss your hands.

Paris, September 26, 1627

From the [most] humble and [most] dev[ot]ed Serv[ant] of
Y[our] [Most] Ill[ustrious] L[or]dsh[ip],

G. F[rancesco],
Archb[ishop], Bish[op] of Cervia

Document 65a. - Archives of Propaganda Fide, SOCG 198, fol. 115, written in Italian; printed in *Annali della Missione* (1972), 3-4, p. 248. The editors are indebted to Angelo Coppo, C. M., for his research, scholarship, and commentaries on this document and the two subsequent ones.

¹Giovanni Francesco Guidi di Bagno. This letter is the reply to the request of Propaganda Fide (cf. Doc. 63a).

²"Mission" was a technical term applied to various groups of persons, often members of religious Orders, who were engaged in apostolic ministry. Their works required the approval of Propaganda Fide.

Addressed: [Most] Ill[ustrious] Card[inal] Ludovisio³

**65b. - MINUTES OF THE SESSION OF PROPAGANDA FIDE
APPROVING THE MISSION**

Congregation 83, November 5, 1627

The approval throughout France of the Mission founded by the Comtesse de Joigny.

5. With reference to the request of His Eminence the [Most] Ill[ustrious] Card[inal] Bentivoglio regarding the Mission founded by Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi and Françoise-Marguerite de Silly, Comte and Comtesse de Joigny, husband and wife, on April 17, 1625, under the title of Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, with a capital of forty-five thousand livres in French currency for [use in] their county and other places in France tainted by heresy. Besides taking due note of the approval already given that same Congregation by the Archbishop of Paris on April 24, 1626, and the report of the Nuncio to France concerning the suitability of Vincent de Paul, priest of Dax and Director of the Mission, and the Nuncio's approval of his eight companions in the Mission, the Sacred Congregation confirmed and approved the Mission, with the proviso that the Director and the Missionaries, before giving any missions or making use of the faculties granted them by the Holy Office, are bound to seek the permission and consent of the local Ordinaries in due time.

³Nicolò Cardinal Albergati-Ludovisio (cf. VIII, 515, n. 1).

Document 65b. - Archives of Propaganda Fide, *Acta*, vol. 4 (1626-27), fols. 304-05, written in Latin; printed in *Annali della Missione* (1972), 3-4, pp. 237-38.

Present at this session in the Quirinal Palace were: Pope Urban VIII (1623-44) and Cardinals Gaspare Borgia, Federico Cornaro, Guido Bentivoglio, Ottavio Bandino, Lorenzo Magalotti, and one of the three Cardinals Barberini (probably Francesco, the Pope's nephew and brother of Cardinal Antonio Barberini. Born in Florence in 1569, he was a Capuchin friar exemplary for piety and charity; created a Cardinal in 1624, he died in 1646.).

**65c. - REQUEST TO THE NUNCIO TO INFORM SAINT VINCENT
OF PAPAL APPROVAL FOR THE MISSION**

(November 13, 1627)

To the Nuncio to France

The institution of the Mission by the Comte and Comtesse de Joigny, together with your letter of this past September 26 having been referred to this Sacred Congregation, and concerning the good results that can be expected from it, His Holiness and these Cardinals, in approving the Mission, have highly praised the founders and have also given orders that there be granted to M. Vincent de Paul, priest of Dax and Director of the Mission, and to his companions, the faculties of the Holy Office, which will be sent in due time.

His Holiness has indicated, however, that it is necessary for the Director and his companions to choose a protector so that the election of new Directors and other Missionaries to replace those who die or cannot or will not continue in the Mission, might proceed in peace and harmony. The Archbishop of Paris has seemed most appropriate for this purpose, since the residence of the aforesaid Mission is in that city.

Will Y[our] L[ordship] kindly notify the said Vincent and companions of the thinking of His Holiness, that, since this directive comes from His Holiness personally, it can be devoutly believed that it is a divine inspiration for the maintenance of a work as outstanding as that of the Comtesse and her husband? If Y[our] L[ordship] thinks it well, he can share this letter with the latter, so that he might know the esteem in which this Sacred Congregation holds his pious and religious resolution. Which, etc.

Rome, November 13, 1627

**66. - FACULTIES GRANTED TO THE PRIESTS OF THE MISSION
BY THE ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS**

(April 10, 1628)

Jean François de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See, Councillor of the most Christian King in his Councils of State and for Sacred Affairs, and Grand Master of the royal chapel, to our beloved and venerable Messire Vincent de Paul, priest, Licentiate in Law, and Principal of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, founded in the University of Paris, greetings in the Lord.

Duly informed of your competence, learning, honesty, and experience and that of your associates, we commissioned you and, in virtue of the present letters, do commission you for the works listed below, giving and granting you and other ecclesiastical persons commissioned by you the authority, power, and faculty to go through all the cities, towns, and villages of our Paris diocese to teach the people Christian doctrine; to absolve any persons from ecclesiastical censures and cases reserved to us; to establish the Confraternity of Charity in those places where it seems useful and to visit those already established; to commute vows; to grant the same indulgences we could grant if we ourselves were present; and we allow you to act in our name in each and every one of these matters, as long as we wish and until our revocation. Consequently, by our ordinary authority, in virtue of the present letters, we command all Deans, Chapters, Priors, religious houses, Pastors, Assistants, and preachers subject to us to willingly invite and announce you and your associates for the above-mentioned functions in their churches.

Given under the seal of our chancery, April 10, 1628.

By proxy for the aforementioned Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Archbishop of Paris.

BAUDOUYN

66a. - SECOND PETITION TO POPE URBAN VIII

(Vol. I, no. 26)

67. - LETTER OF THE NUNCIO TO CARDINAL LUDOVISIO

(June 21, 1628)

To my Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Lord and Most
Honored Protector¹

... The Fathers of the Mission, founded by the late Marquise de Joigny, wife of the General of the Galleys, now Father [de] Gondi of the Oratory, are requesting the approval of the S[acred] Congregation, along with some privileges contained in the attached petition. I strongly recommend this to Y[our] [Most] Ill[ustrious] L[ordship], in whatever seems proper to him. I can assure you in all sincerity that the conduct of the Missionaries themselves is excellent, and their Institute is very necessary and will be most productive in the dioceses of this kingdom, in which they will be working. I conclude this by humbly kissing the hands of Y[our] [Most] Ill[ustrious] L[ordship].²

I am Y[our] [Most] Ill[ustrious] and Most Reverend L[ordship]'s most humble and devoted servant.

GIOV[ANNI] FRANCESCO,
Archb[ishop], Bish[op] of Cervia

From Chives, in the camp below La Rochelle, June 21, 1628.³

Document 66a. The history of negotiations carried out in 1628 for the approval of the Congregation of the Mission was detailed by Coste in vol. I, based on the documents available at the time. Angelo Coppo, C.M., rewrote the whole sequence of the negotiations in a series of articles presenting unpublished documents of which Coste had no knowledge (cf. *Annali della Missione* [1973], pp. 37-73).

Document 67. - Archives of Propaganda Fide, III, *Lettere di Francia, Avignone e Svizzera*, 1628, no. 130, fol. 28, original, written in Italian. *Annali della Missione* (1973), pp. 42-43, prints a fuller text and a secretary's note taken from SOCG 130, fols. 44-45. This edition uses the latter text.

¹Coste mistakenly gave this as *pronipote*, instead of *p[ad]ron*.

²Since the first paragraph of this letter treats of a matter extraneous to the Congregation of the Mission, only the second paragraph has been given here.

³Note of the Secretary: "He sends a petition from the Fathers of the Mission of the Comtesse de Gondi, stating that they desire confirmation of the same Mission and certain privileges. He attests that these are meritorious, not only because of the goodness of the subjects but also because of the good results the said Mission can bring about.

August 22, 1628. Session 96."

68. - LETTER OF LOUIS XIII TO POPE URBAN VIII

(June 24, 1628)

Most Holy Father,

The good results and great edification our subjects in rural areas are receiving from the kind assistance and instruction given them by the Priests of the Mission, founded to go from village to village to preach, exhort, hear confessions, and catechize the poor common people, without accepting any worldly remuneration whatsoever, causes us to desire that this Mission be formed into an Institution that will grow and endure into the future. That is why we write this letter to Your Holiness to implore you with all our devotion that it may be your good pleasure to favor and support by your authority such a holy, praiseworthy, and useful plan, establishing the Mission of these priests as a formal Congregation, in accordance with the requests that will be made in this regard on our behalf by M. de Béthune our Ambassador, whom we have entrusted with them.

We ask God, Most Holy Father, to keep and maintain Your Holiness for years to come in the government and preservation of our Holy Mother the Church.

Document 68. - Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Correspondance de Rome*, 1628, vol. 41, fol. 124. A marginal note states that "the letter was written from the camp at La Rochelle." The Royal Army was besieging La Rochelle, the stronghold of the Huguenots.

**69. - LETTER OF LOUIS XIII TO THE COMTE DE BÉTHUNE,
FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO THE HOLY SEE**

(June 24, 1628)

Monsieur de Béthune,

You will see from the letter I am writing to the Pope the urgent request I am making to him that it might please His Holiness to establish as a Congregation the Priests of the Mission, founded to go from village to village to preach, exhort, catechize, and hear the confessions of the poor country people, with no temporal remuneration. I am impelled to make this request because of the good results and great edification I hear that my poor subjects are receiving from these priests. That is why I desire that you do everything necessary with His Holiness and wherever else needed to make my intention operative. Because I am sure you will use all your influence in this, since it is a matter that pertains to the glory and service of God and the consolation of my poor subjects, I will not prolong this letter.

**70. - LETTER OF THE NUNCIO TO BISHOP INGOLI,
SECRETARY OF PROPAGANDA FIDE**

(July 23, 1628)

To My Most Illustrious Lord,

The Priests of the Mission founded by the late Marquise de Joigny, wife of the General of the Galleys, now Father [de] Gondy, have asked me to send the enclosed letters from the King for the Most Illustrious Lord¹ and for M. de Béthune, recommending negotiations there for the approval of the Congregation and their priv-

Document 69. - Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Correspondance de Rome*, 1628, vol. 41, fol. 124. A marginal note in the King's letter to the Pope states: "To the Pope and to M. de Béthune, on behalf of the Fathers of the Mission, June 24, from the camp of La Rochelle."

Document 70. - Archives of Propaganda Fide, III, *Lettere di Francia, Avignone e Svizzera*, 1628, no. 130, fol. 33, original, written in Italian.

¹Pope Urban VIII.

ileges. I felt I could not send them to a better hand than that of Your Lordship, who will be able to use them according to this need and as he judges expedient. Furthermore, I recommend also that he expedite the foregoing business very promptly for the help I am certain it will bring to souls.

Reminding him of my customary affection, I kiss his hands in all sincerity.

GIOV[ANNI] FRANCESCO,
Archbishop, Bishop of Cervia

From Chives, at the camp below La Rochelle, July 23, 1628.

70a. - THIRD PETITION TO POPE URBAN VIII

(Vol. I, no. 28.)

71. - LETTER OF THE NUNCIO TO CARDINAL LUDOVISIO

(August 15, 1628)

To my [Most] Ill[ustrious] and [Most] Rev[erend] Lord and Most Honored Protector¹

This past June 21,² I sent a petition directed to Y[our] [Most] Ill[ustrious] L[ordship] from the Priests of the Mission, founded by the Marquise de Joigny, who was the wife of Father [de] Gondi. Now, these same priests have entrusted me with a new one, which is attached, for certain other favors they are requesting of the Holy See, asking me not only to send it but to recommend it most fer-

Document 71. - Archives of Propaganda Fide, III, *Lettere di Francia, Avignone e Svizzera*, 1628, no. 130, fol. 35, original, written in Italian. *Annali della Missione* (1973), pp. 42-43, prints the text taken from SOCG 130, fol. 59, with a previously unpublished secretary's note from fol. 65.

¹Cf. Doc. 67, n. 1.

²Cf. Doc. 67.

vently to the kindness of Y[our] [Most] Ill[ustrious] L[ordship]. I willingly accept this commission, knowing with the most probable certainty the great usefulness that can be expected from this Congregation. It will be up to Y[our] [Most] Ill[ustrious] L[ordship] to arrange for these requests as you judge expedient, and to expedite them quickly in order to advance the work of these good priests in leading souls back to the bosom of Holy Church and extricating them from sin. I conclude here by humbly kissing the hands of Y[our] [Most] Ill[ustrious] L[ordship].

I am Y[our] Most Ill[ustrious] and Most Reverend L[ordship]'s most humble and devoted servant.

GIOV[ANNI] FRANCESCO,
Archbishop, Bishop of Cervia

From the camp below La Rochelle, August 15, 1628.³

71a. - LETTER OF THE NUNCIO TO BISHOP FRANCESCO INGOLI

(August 17, 1628)

My [Most] Ill[ustrious] L[ord],

I have suggested to S[igno]re Gabriello Suonita that he discuss with the widow de Breves. . . .

The attached is written by the Queen Regent¹ to the Ambassador for the purpose of acting in favor of the business of the Missionaries of the late Marquise de Joigny. They want something more, as Y[our] L[ordship] will see in this new petition, which I am sending

³Note of the Secretary: "The Nuncio sends a new detailed petition from the Fathers of the Mission of the Comtesse de Joigny, in which they request additional favors besides those contained in the other petition, and they await their posting, attesting to the good results to be obtained by those Fathers in the said Mission.

"The latest favors are posted separately from the said petition, etc."

"September 25, 1628, Cong. 98. Letter acknowledged, to be referred to the decision of the S[acred] Congregation, neg[ative] in this affair, which was sent to him with the letter of. . ."

Document 71a. - Archives of Propaganda Fide, SOCG, no. 130, fol. 66, 73, original signed document, written in Italian; printed in *Annali della Missione* (1973), p. 57.

¹Anne of Austria.

to Card[inal] Ludovisio, and which I recommend to you most earnestly, cordially kissing your hands.

From the camp below La Rochelle, August 17, 1628.

The d[evoted] servant of Y[our] L[ordship],

GIOVAN[N]I FRANCESCO,
Archb[ishop], Bishop of Cervia

**72. - REPORT TO PROPAGANDA FIDE
ON THE JUNE 1628 PETITION¹ OF SAINT VINCENT**

(August 22, 1628)²

Concerning the Mission of the Comte and Comtesse de Joigny

The secular Priests of the Mission of France, endowed by the Comte and Comtesse de Joigny, under the direction and leadership of Messire Vincent de Paul, priest of Dax, after recounting the good results they obtained in various dioceses of France, preaching and hearing confessions in the towns and villages, causing enmities to disappear and introducing peace, converting heretics, and doing various other works for the benefit of the neighbor, all of this with the permission of the Ordinaries, determined to establish and found a Congregation of priests under the title of Missionaries, are petitioning Your Lordship to deign to approve and confirm it by your apostolic authority, with the following conditions and faculties:

(1) That His Holiness make the said Vincent de Paul its Superior General;

(2) That they may unite other Congregations in other dioceses to this principal one and accept candidates;

(3) That the priests be exempt from the jurisdiction of the Ordinaries; being bound, nevertheless *in the missions as in things pertaining to them*, to obey those same Ordinaries;

Document 72. - Archives of Propaganda Fide, III, *Lettere di Francia, Avignone e Svizzera*, 1628, fol. 30, original, written in Italian.

¹Cf. vol. I, no. 26.

²Date given on the back of the document.

(4) To establish Confraternities of Charity to care for the sick corporally and spiritually;

(5) To draw up Statutes and Constitutions that are not contrary to the Pontifical Constitutions and Conciliar decrees, especially of Trent, and to change them, as is done in other Congregations or religious Communities;

(6) To communicate to them, like the other Congregations capable of legacies and property, the faculties of Missionaries as explained briefly at the end of their petition.

In letters from La Rochelle of June 21, 1628, the Nuncio to France recommends this work to the Sacred Congregation in whatever will seem proper, asserting that the present members of the Congregation are of the highest morals and that their Institute is very necessary and will be most fruitful in the dioceses of that kingdom.

The obstacle for this Congregation is that introducing a new religious Community with exemption from the Ordinaries is very prejudicial to them because many priests will join this Congregation to escape that, and in this way the secular clergy will be weakened and reduced. With such a large number of religious Communities, it is well to be attentive to this. We see, in fact, that the Sacred Canons have always taken this into account, prohibiting that religious be given secular benefices because, should these be taken from them, the secular clergy would, of necessity, decline, and likewise ordering the opening of seminaries with such care and insistence, as is seen in the Sacred Council of Trent, which also wanted to oblige the non-mendicant religious to contribute to the establishment of them, keeping in mind the Canons that, if the Church were left in the hands of the regular clergy, whose main purpose is to maintain and increase their religious Communities and had no other concern, the ecclesiastical hierarchy would likely disappear.

Another obstacle is that, if a religious Community is established for the purpose of giving Missions, which is the case of this Congregation, as it grows it will want to become a canonically constituted religious Community, and the other Communities will become in-

dignant and will not furnish the Sacred Congregation with missionaries.

Judgment

It seems to me, however, that, considering the present needs of France, the Mission of the aforesaid priests may be established by a decree of the Sacred Congregation, with full faculties *for the entire kingdom of France with the permission of the Ordinaries*, but it may not increase to more than twenty or twenty-five priests, nor be given the appearance of a Congregation or Confraternity because the nature of the Mission does not call for such titles nor such bonds, since it will often be necessary to change the members of the Mission for diverse reasons and to disband the Mission when the need no longer exists. Therefore, these and the other considerations can be pointed out to the Nuncio, instructing him to explain to those priests that the Apostolic See does not think it well to establish either religious Communities, or Confraternities, or Congregations of Missions, since, apart from the fact that the nature of the Mission is contrary to these bonds, the perpetuity of Congregations, religious Communities, and Confraternities is contrary to the same Missions, which are established to meet certain needs that cease with the conversion of the people to whom they are sent.

**73. - DECISION OF PROPAGANDA FIDE
ON THE JUNE 1628 PETITION OF SAINT VINCENT**

(August 22, 1628)

The meeting was held at the Quirinal in the presence of His Holiness and the six Cardinals who took part, namely: Millini, Borgia,

Ubal dini,¹ Bentivoglio,² Ludovisio, Sant'Onofrio³ and Most Reverend Fathers Corsi and Toniello. . . .⁴

9. Upon the report presented by the Most Illustrious Cardinal Bentivoglio concerning the letters of the Nuncio to France⁵ and the petitions of Messire Vincent de Paul, priest of Dax, Director of the Mission founded and endowed by the Comte and Comtesse de Joigny, the Sacred Congregation, considering that those petitions exceed the limits of the Mission and tend toward the founding of a new religious Institute, judged that they should be rejected altogether. A letter should be sent to the Nuncio to persuade the priest Messire Vincent and his associates that, in accord with the considerations referred to in the discussion of this matter, they should remain within the simple limits of the Mission, and that the Most Illustrious Prelates will procure the confirmation of His Holiness and the faculties which the Holy Office usually grants for the Missions of France.

73a. - PROPAGANDA FIDE TO THE NUNCIO TO FRANCE

The requests which Vincent de Paul, Director of the Mission of the Comtesse de Joigny, has addressed to this S[acred] Congregation, seem excessive and concern the institution of a new religious Order rather than a Mission, and have been completely rejected by H[is] Holiness and by the same S[acred] Congregation. For that reason, the latter has wished to forward to Y[our] L[ordship] the enclosed considerations on the documentation Y[our] L[ordship] has sent, so that, in line with their intent, you may try to persuade M[essire] Vincent and his companions to renounce the foundation

¹Roberto Ubal dini.

²Guido Bentivoglio.

³Francesco Antonio Barberini, brother of Pope Urban VIII.

⁴The last two were consultors for Propaganda Fide.

⁵Giovanni Francesco Guidi di Bagno.

Document 73a. - Vatican Archives, *Lettere volgari della S.C. de Propaganda Fide*, vol. 7 (1628), fol. 119, written in Italian; printed in *Annali della Missione* (1973), pp. 51-52.

of a new religious Order and be satisfied with the limits of a simple mission, for which My [Most] Ill[ustrious] Lords will procure from O[ur] Lord,¹ its confirmation and the faculties which the H[oly] Office normally grants for the Missions of France. With this, etc.

Rome, September 1, 1628

73b. - LETTER OF THE NUNCIO TO BISHOP INGOLI

(September 11, 1628)

My Most Ill[ustrious] L[or]d,

Thank you for the favors done for Father Sergriffio in consideration of me.

I would be displeased if the business of the Missionaries of the Comte and Comtesse de Joigny did not go through because the Institute is very successful in this kingdom. At least, Y[our] L[ordship] might act in such a way that a series of articles might be drawn up there, which the Congregation could accept, and send them to me so that with them I will be able to appease these good priests, who might be too upset if they heard that their wishes were rejected out of hand.

It is a great consolation for me that the Canons of Cervia are being brought back . . . to common life . . . I hope . . . which they will be every day . . . more content. . . . And I conclude here by most cordially embracing the hands of Y[our] L[ordship].

From the camp below La Rochelle, September 11, 1628.

I am Y[our Most] Ill[ustrious] and Most Reverend L[ordship]'s most humble and devoted servant.

GIOVAN[N]I FRANCESCO,
Archb[ishop], Bish[op] of Cervia

¹Pope Urban VIII.

Document 73b. - Archives of Propaganda Fide, SOCG 130, fol. 68, original signed document, written in Italian; printed in *Annali della Missione* (1973), pp. 56-60.

73c. PROPAGANDA FIDE TO THE NUNCIO TO FRANCE

To the Nuncio to France

Concerning the business of the Mission of the Comtesse de Joigny, since this S[acred] Congregation has already taken the resolution which Y[our] L[ordship] will have seen in the letters of . . . ,¹ I have nothing to reply to you other than what was written again with the second request on this same affair, except to say that I received it, as I now do with this. . . .²

Rome, September 30, 1628

74. - LETTERS PATENT ORDERING THE PARLEMENT
TO RATIFY THE LETTERS OF MAY 1627

(February 15, 1630)

Louis, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, to our beloved and loyal Councillors of our court at the Parlement of Paris, greetings.

By our letters patent of May 1627,¹ here attached under the counterseal of our chancellery, we have, for the glory of God and the spiritual relief of our subjects living in the rural areas, accepted, authorized, and confirmed the foundation made on April 17, 1625,² by Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, Comte de Joigny, at that time General of our Galleys and now a priest of the Congregation of the Oratory, and the late Lady Françoise-Marguerite de Silly his wife, for food and maintenance for certain priests of learning and outstanding piety. Associated and living in common, the latter wanted

Document 73c. - Vatican Archives, *Lettere volgari della S. C. de Propaganda Fide*, vol. 7 (1628), fol. 136, written in Italian; printed in *Annali della Missione* (1973), p. 62.

¹No date was inserted. The decisions mentioned here were taken on August 22.

²The name of the person who signed the letter is not given, but it was probably the Prefect, Cardinal Ludovisio.

Document 74. - Arch. Nat., M 210, printed document.

¹Cf. Doc. 62.

²Cf. Doc. 59.

to devote themselves entirely to the spiritual instruction of the poor common people, going from village to village, with the consent of the Prelates of our kingdom, to preach, hear confessions, exhort, and catechize, without taking or receiving any remuneration for this. You might object to allowing these priests, associated in that way, to enjoy the implementation of our letters, given the fact that, because of their usual occupations, as well as because of various obstacles that have arisen for them, they have been unable to present them to you or request ratification of them at the time we appointed. They would like to do so now and have asked us for this purpose to grant them other letters patent necessary for this.

For these reasons, and since this free instruction of the poor common people is a genuinely evangelical work and because those priests have brought about very great conversions and amendments of life wherever they have given the mission, we will and we order by these letters that, upon the presentation that those priests, associated and living in common, will make to you of our letters of approval of their Institute, you will ratify them and allow those priests to enjoy what is contained in them, just as if they had presented them to you at the time we had appointed, and before they expired; for such is our will.

Given in Paris on February 15, in the year of grace 1630 and the twentieth year of our reign.

LOUIS

DE LOMÉNIÉ

**75. - OPPOSITION OF THE PASTORS OF PARIS
TO APPROVAL OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION**

Motives for the opposition presented to you, our members of the Parlement, by M. Étienne Le Tonnelier, priest, Doctor of the faculty of theology, Syndic of the Pastors of this city and of the faubourgs of Paris, in his own name and on behalf of and in the name of the

Pastors of the diocese who oppose the ratification of certain letters patent of the month of May 1627, against the so-called and designated Priests of the Mission, the petitioners, for the ratification of those letters.

To demonstrate to the Court that, in the event that it may be pleased to disregard the ratification of the letters, to authorize the Congregation and Association of the said priests, and that it may be judged not to be contrary to the peace and tranquility of the Church and the State, at least that, taking into account the opposition and acknowledging its right, may it please the court to order three things:

(1) That they will renounce any ministry in the parishes and churches of all the cities of the kingdom.

(2) That, in devoting themselves as they promise to the spiritual instruction of poor country people, they will refrain from entering any church unless they are sent there expressly by the Bishop of the diocese, with the permission and authorization of the Pastor or Prior-Pastor of the church, and not perform any function during the regular hours for the service customary in each of the churches. In addition, they may not claim any salary or remuneration, either from the benefice or from any of the inhabitants of the church in which they might say that they had preached, exhorted, heard confessions, or catechized, and will be bound to do everything free of charge, both in the present and in the future.

For these purposes, the opposing party points out to the court that the Pastors of the city of Paris, informed that the so-called and designated Priests of the Mission were considering establishing their Congregation, and that, in consequence of the foundations made by the late wife¹ of the General of the Galleys, for food and maintenance for certain priests of known doctrine, piety, and ability, intended for the spiritual instruction of the poor country people, they were seeking ratification of the letters patent they obtained with a view to erecting and establishing the Congregation, have determined to oppose the confirmation of these letters and, in order to

¹Madame de Gondi.

do so, have designated as proxy their Syndic Le Tonnelier, to present this opposition now to be made—opposition which the court may note is not at all contrary to such a holy Institution nor intended to hinder any Congregation striving toward the good of the Church; for the declaration the Pastors are making is quite the contrary. If, however, it pleases the court, it will admit that these men, living in this city of Paris, have undertaken to formulate this opposition, not with a view to impede this Congregation—if indeed the court judges this to be useful for the peace and tranquility of the Church and the State, and the edification and instruction of the poor common people—but so that, under the pretext of piety, no trouble and dissension will arise in the churches under pretext of this new Institution.

Perhaps someone will try to say that the Pastors of Paris had no need to formulate an opposition, given that one of the principal clauses and conditions of their future Congregation is that the priests will renounce any ministry in the city. They have felt, however, that it was not sufficient for those priests to make that renunciation, but that it may please the court to require and compel them to do so and to order that none of them may enter that Congregation without being obliged to make that very explicit renunciation so that, in the future, they may not be able to use the failure to make that renunciation as an excuse for usurping the rights of the Pastors.

For, although all such Congregations in the beginning and source of their first institution may start off with the purest of intentions and be founded for considerations of the most eminent piety, in the course of time, ambition and avarice may alter them completely, and it can be said, in this particular case, that, if the court does not set things straight from the very beginning, this Institution will create a division and claim that there should be two Superiors in the same parish, one to celebrate the service and take care of administrative functions, and the other who, having nothing to do with the services, to do the preaching, exhorting, and catechizing. And when there is a good number of them, be it in small towns or in villages, they will want a share in the income of the parishes and will say that, since they serve in the same church, they should be remu-

nerated with the same income. This is a great misfortune, which the court is asked to attend to very carefully since many Congregations already founded on similar pretexts remain either useless or unsuccessful; or, if they do produce results, do so by encroaching on parishes in the small towns and country villages which they are taking over daily. Even if people might try to say that there is specific mention in the letters patent of the renunciation the priests will make beforehand of any kind of ministry in cities, the Pastors of the city and faubourgs of Paris are not involved in this, but still felt it was their charitable duty to express their opposition again, on behalf of all the Pastors in the country and villages of all the dioceses of France, so that no trouble will arise for them in the future in consequence of the new Institution and establishment. We ask that it may please the court to accept, by the mouth of the Syndic and the Pastors of Paris, what the country Pastors would point out to it if they had been informed of the proceedings taking place to obtain confirmation of the said letters.

Their primary interest, which the court will allow to be explained to it, is that, since it is neither fitting nor proper for the Church for anyone to come into a parish to celebrate the services there or perform any church ministry, except by permission of the person holding the title of Pastor, may it also please the court, in proceeding to the confirmation, to order that, having received the mission from the Bishop, they will be bound to get the permission of the Pastor, as has always been done: that all vicars, chaplains, and priests who wish to minister habitually in a church must obtain the permission and authorization of the Pastor. This has always been observed in the hierarchical order of the Church, which it would be improper to disrupt by the establishment of this new Congregation.

The second concern the Church has, in the person of all Pastors in general, is that whoever has this mission from the Bishop and has permission from the Pastor should be bound and obliged to respect the hours of the services at the times it has always been customary to offer and celebrate them in the churches, such as Matins and the canonical Hours, in the churches where they are chanted, and the hours for preaching and Vespers. The reason is that, if this new

Priest of the Mission should come and abuse this and want to take the regular hours for the service, it is certain that more abuses and scandals than edification would come from this Institution because there would be only daily fights and quarrels between the usual priests and the priests of that extraordinary Mission. The extraordinary Mission would be unnecessary if the Bishops, taking care of their flocks, were to give the parishes only to persons of recognized piety and ability. In this case, one Pastor would be sufficient to celebrate the service, preach, and catechize.

Therefore, may it please the court to find a solution to this question so that this new, extraordinary Mission may not be prejudicial to the functions of the Ordinary.

The third concern, not only of the Pastors in what regards them personally, but of the entire Church, is that, by the decree of the court which will be issued, the hope of ever being able to claim or ask for any remuneration by way of salary from the benefice of the church they will enter, or from the people, will be eliminated and withdrawn from these new Priests of the Mission, who will, rather, be satisfied with the foundations made for their Congregation. It is all the more necessary to provide for this because it is certain that, no matter what pretext they may allege in this new Institution for refusing, their real intention is none other than to arrive imperceptibly at a share of the benefices and to have it declared in the future that the revenues of the parishes be divided and shared, half of the proceeds going to the Pastor who performs the divine service and the other half to the person to whom the Bishop has given the mission of preaching and catechizing. To avoid these difficulties we ask that the court, with its usual prudence, remedy and obviate in due time every sort of evil design that might be hatching under the pretext of that pious Institution and Congregation:

For these reasons, the opposing party persists in the motives for this strong opposition and concludes.

LE FÉRON

**76. - REGISTRATION IN THE PARLEMENT OF LETTERS PATENT
OF MAY 1627 AND FEBRUARY 15, 1630**

(April 4, 1631)

The court, the Grand Chambers, Tournelle and de l'Édit assembled have seen the letters patent issued in Paris in May 1627 and signed "Louis," with "For the King, de Loménie" on the fold, and sealed on silk knotted cords with the great seal in green wax. By these letters the said Lord confirms the foundation made by Messire Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, Comte de Joigny, at the time General of the Galleys and now a priest of the Congregation of the Oratory of Jesus, and by his late wife, Lady Françoise-Marguerite de Silly, for food and maintenance for certain priests of recognized learning, piety, and ability to form among themselves a Congregation and Association under the name of Priests of the Mission, to live in common, and to work, with the consent of the Prelates of this kingdom, each within the limits of his own diocese, to attend to exercises of charity and the spiritual instruction of the people of the rural areas, as is explained at greater length in the letters; other letters patent, of February 15, 1630, for the confirmation of the letters; the foundation contract signed before Dupuys and Boucher, notaries, on April 17, 1625, at the bottom of which is the consent and approval of François de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris, dated April 24, 1626; the request presented to the court by the Priests of the Mission for the ratification of the letters; the Act of December 4, 1630, containing the opposition formulated by Maître Étienne Tonnelier, Doctor of theology of the University of Paris, Pastor of Saint-Eustache, Syndic of the Pastors of this city and its faubourgs, on the confirmation of the letters; the motives and means of the opposition; the petition of the Priests of the Mission, containing their replies and the declaration that they renounced in perpetuity giving the mission and ministering in the towns of this kingdom that have an archbishopric, bishopric, or presidial court, and all profits, remuneration, gifts, collections, collection boxes, and payment of sala-

ries from the income of the parishes, or from the parishioners in places where they will go to give the said missions, nor to perform any other functions in the parishes during the hours designated for the celebration of divine service; the conclusions of the Attorney General of the King; and all considered;

The court, not abiding by the opposition, has ordered and does order that the said letters and contract be registered in its court clerk's office to be enforced according to their form and contents; with the onus, however, that the Priests of the Mission will be able to work habitually in any diocese only with the permission of the Bishop of the diocese, and carry out their functions only with the consent of both the Bishop and the Pastors of the parishes into which they will go, without being allowed to perform any of their functions and exercises in them during divine service that may trouble its order, nor, in reason of this, lay claim to any profits, remuneration, payment, gifts, collections, collection boxes, or other compensation either from the tithes, Pastors, or members of the parishes. They will, however, be bound to go whenever they are ordered to do so by the Bishops of the dioceses.

Given in the Parlement, April 4, 1631.

DU TILLET¹

**76a. - CONTRACT OF THE PRIESTS OF THE MISSION
AND LOUISE DE MARILLAC¹ WITH GILLES GUÉRIN**

(August 26, 1631)

Present were Maîtres Vincent de Paul, priest, Licentiate in Canon Law, and Superior of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission; Antoine Portail; Jean de la Salle; Jean Bécu, P[rocurato]r

¹Chief Clerk of the Court.

Document 76a. - Arch. Nat., *Minutier Central*, XVIII, register 186, fol. 197; printed in *Annales C. M.* (1937), pp. 241-44.

¹Saint Louise de Marillac, Foundress, with Saint Vincent, of the Daughters of Charity (cf. **VIII**, 97, n. 1).

of the Congregation; and Jean Dehorgny, all priests of that Congregation, residing at the Collège des Bons-Enfants, established on rue Saint-Victor, and all forming and representing as of now the major and sound part of the Priests of the Mission, assembled in the hall of the collège to reflect on and discuss the affairs of the Congregation; and Mlle. Louise [de] Marillac—widow of the late noble man Messire Antoine Le Gras, secretary to the Queen Mother—residing on rue Saint-Victor. Willingly and voluntarily, under no constraint, as they declare, they have recognized and acknowledged and do acknowledge having sold, created, constituted, established, and allocated, and by these present letters do sell, create, constitute, establish, and allocate everything and for always, promised and promising, individually and collectively, for everything without division or discussion, renouncing the rights of sureties, security, order by right and benefits of discussion, guarantee from all disturbances, debts, mortgages, evictions, commitments, gifts, dowries, and any other hindrances whatsoever, to produce and invest profitably its principal and back interest, as well as redemption, to the noble gentleman Maître Guérin, Councillor of the King and examiner of his accounts, residing on rue Saint-Victor in Paris, buyer and acquirer here present, for himself, his heirs, and his rightful beneficiaries in the future, 168 livres 15 sous *tournois* of annual and perpetual income.

They may obtain, take, promise, commit, receive, and accept them, and the constituent sellers have promised and will be bound, do promise and are bound, to give and pay the buyer, individually and collectively, for everything without division or discussion, indifferent as to the manner of giving and paying the buyer in his house in Paris or the bearer, annually each quarter, as customary, the first quarter payment falling due on the last day of September for that period, and, from then on every quarter, annually and for always, all to be taken from the 2000 livres income belonging to the Congregation. They have the right to take these on the salt reserves and storehouses of this kingdom, constituted by the Provosts of Merchants and the magistrates of this city of Paris on June 3, 1625, to M. de Paul; likewise, on 286 livres *tournois* income in two parts,

which the demoiselle told him belonged to her personally and which she had the right to take on the *aides*² and impositions of this kingdom, as generally on each and every one of the properties and temporal revenues of the Priests of the Mission, and the income, estates, *seigneuries*, and immovable possessions, present and future, of the demoiselle, on each section, part, and share of them, the most obvious and best appearing, those responding and principally obliged for the others according to the preference and option of the buyer, his heirs, and his beneficiaries, which they have for this purpose to entrust, affect, oblige, and mortgage in order to pay, continue to produce, and invest profitably the 168 livres 15 sous income valid, creditworthy, and payable annually forever each quarter of the year. There will be no loss or diminution in this, notwithstanding change of currency and possessors, prescription, time lapse, stoppage of payment, or any other things contrary to it and without the general obligation overriding the particular, or the particular overriding the general, so that the income will be enjoyed by the buyer, his heirs, and his beneficiaries to do with and dispose of it as seems fit.

This sale and settlement has thus been made at a charge of the sum of 2700 livres, which the constituent sellers have acknowledged and do acknowledge having obtained and received from the buyer, who has now given them that amount produced, paid, counted, and handed over in cash by the undersigned notaries in silver *quarts d'écus*³ and other currency, all valid and at the present rate for the sum of 2700 livres. The constituent sellers were and are content with this and have been paid, have released, and do release the buyers and all others, renouncing possession . . . willing . . . attor[ney] . . . the bearer . . . giving power . . . even though the 168 livres 15 sous income is annual and perpetual, it will be and will remain nevertheless always redeemable by selling, giving, and paying by the redeemer or by redeeming in a single payment a simi-

²Indirect taxes on consumer goods such as meat, fish, wood, and especially on wine.

³A *quart d'écu* was a coin worth fifteen sous. It was withdrawn from circulation around 1640.

lar sum of 2700 livres, with the arrears due at the time and entered for the period of time, all legal fees being assumed.

For the execution of what is included in these present letters and the consequences, the constituent sellers have chosen and do choose their irrevocable and perpetual domicile at the Collège des Bons-Enfants, where the Fathers of the Mission reside. In that place thus chosen they will, consent, and agree that all juridical acts and deeds to be brought against them there should be, and apply with as much effect, force, and strength, as if they were expressed to them personally and in their true domicile, notwithstanding. . . . Promising . . . obliging . . . each of them individually and for all, without division or discussion, renouncing as above.

Drawn up and signed at the collège here on the afternoon of August 26, 1631.

VINCENT DE PAUL

A. PORTAIL

J. DE LA SALLE

J. BÉCU

JEAN DEHORGNY

LOUISE DE MARILLAC

GUÉRIN

CAPITAIN

CHARLES⁴

⁴In the margin of the first page: "By his Act signed before Nonnet and Bruneau, notaries at the Châtelet of Paris, on September 18, 1653, Étienne Guérin, *seigneur de Mercusson*, appeared in the name of and as guardian of Mme. Catherine Guérin, minor daughter of the late M. Gilles Guérin, named in the present document, and Mme. Marie Bonneau, widow of M. Étienne Guérin, in the name of and as guardian of the minor children of the deceased and herself. The minors represent their father and Mme. Catherine Guérin, heir of the late M. Gilles Guérin and Mme. Louise Goislard, their mother and ancestress. They have reduced the income of 168 livres 15 sous in the place mentioned, from the rate of 6.25% to 5%, based on 135 livres annual income, payable quarterly, as is stated in the act of reduction granting the power to make the present mention, made to the undersigned notaries in Paris, on October 15, 1653." Signed: CAFFARD, CHALON

77. - CONTRACT FOR THE UNION OF SAINT-LAZARE PRIORY¹
TO THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

(January 7, 1632)

To all those who will read these present letters, Louis Séguier, Chevalier, Baron de Saint-Brisson, Seigneur des Ruaux and de Saint-Firmin, Councillor of the King, Gentleman in Ordinary of his Chamber, and Guard of the Office of Provost of Paris, sends greetings.

We make it known that, before the undersigned Jean Desnotz and Étienne Païsant, notaries and attorneys of our sire the King at the Châtelet of Paris, were present in person, on the one hand, the venerable priest Brother Adrien Le Bon,² professed religious and Prior of the conventual priory, leprosarium, and administration of the Canons Regular of Saint-Lazare, Order of Saint Augustine, in Paris; Brother Nicolas Maheut, Subprior; Claude Cousin, *Receveur*; Claude Cothereau, Bursar; Richard Levasseur, Sacristan; and Adrien Descortils, Jacques Lescellier, François Cacquet, and Claude de Morennes, all Brothers and religious of the said priory, assembled in their Chapter hall in the usual manner at the sound of the bell. Present in person, on the other hand, was Maître Vincent de Paul, also a priest, Superior of the Congregation of the Mission, in his own name and representing all the priests of the said Congregation, residing at the Collège des Bons-Enfants, contiguous to the Porte Saint-Victor, situated in this city of Paris, and responsible for having the present letters ratified by one month from today.

The said Prior and the religious state that they have realized for some years now that, by the grace of God, the disease of leprosy has been less prevalent and the number of lepers not so large as at the time of the institution, foundation, and establishment of the priory,

Document 77. - Arch. Nat., M 212, original.

¹Saint-Lazare was outside the city limits of Paris. At its greatest extent, the buildings and enclosure covered a vast quadrangle which today is encompassed by rue du Paradis, rue du Faubourg-Saint-Denis, boulevard de la Chapelle, and rue du Faubourg-Poissonnière. (Cf. Jean Parrang, "Saint-Lazare" in *Petites Annales de S. Vincent de Paul*, 1903, pp. 13-30.) In his petition to Pope Urban VIII (cf. I, 248-57), Saint Vincent gives a detailed description of the situation of Saint-Lazare in 1634.

²Adrien Le Bon (cf. VII, 502, n. 2).

with the result that most often—even now—there have been no lepers here; thus the charity that was practiced in housing and treating poor lepers has all but ceased. They acknowledge further that the admittance made by the predecessor of the Saint-Lazare Priory to the Congregation of Saint-Victor-lez-Paris, as also of the other houses admitted into it, was dissolved and annulled by the decision of the Priors, religious, and convent of Saint-Victor following their Chapter declaration dated Friday, December 5, 1625, signed and authenticated by their clerk, and inserted at the end of the present letters. In consequence of this, all the exercises of the Congregation ceased entirely and were discontinued, with the result that no further visitation has been made and no Chapters held since that time, in accord with the ordinance of the said Congregations;

The above-mentioned Prior and the religious of Saint-Lazare considered also that, since the revenues of the priory had been intended for the corporal relief and assistance of poor lepers, and, since there were no lepers, it would be more normal and in conformity with the intention of the founders to apply those revenues to the spiritual assistance of poor people in rural areas far from the cities, tainted by the leprosy of sin and having no instruction at all in the mysteries of faith necessary for salvation, and that in several places in France the Priests of the Mission were having remarkable success in this, doing it free of charge and with no remuneration;

For these reasons, having seriously considered the usefulness and necessity of the Institution of the latter and their great success in giving their missions, and in order to cooperate in the establishment and increase in numbers of the priests in such a way that they might more easily support and continue the works of their mission to the ever greater advantage of the people, they have made, decided, and come to an agreement with M. Vincent, in accord, nonetheless, with the good pleasure of our Holy Father the Pope,³ the Archbishop of Paris His Most Christian Majesty, and the members of the Parlement, as follows:

³Urban VIII (1623-44).

Be it known that, in line with what the Prior has promised and because of that, as soon as the Archbishop of Paris has agreed, approved, and consented to the present letters and their entire contents, the former will be bound to constitute one or several appropriate, valid, and irrevocable powers of attorney to resign the priory, leprosarium, or administration of Saint-Lazare, with each and every one of its profits, benefits, revenues, and emoluments, even yielding his administration of them into the hands of our Holy Father the Pope,⁴ or his Vice-Chancellor, or some other person having this canonical power, subject to the consent mentioned above, to be united, annexed, and incorporated in perpetuity to the aforesaid Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, with the following responsibilities, clauses, conditions, and reservations:

Namely, full lodging such as the Prior occupies in the priory, of which he may not be dispossessed during his lifetime for any reason or circumstance whatsoever, nor of his title of former Prior, which he will retain during his lifetime, with full liberty to go to the church, attend services, and keep his rank, even in the Chapter Hall and refectory, whenever he wishes to go there;

Exception is also made of the Rougemont property, dependent on the priory, with all its appurtenances and dependencies, which the Prior may enjoy and use, and may dispose of its profits during his lifetime, as belonging to him, without being bound to give any account, report, or restitution of either the whole or part of it, nor may he be dispossessed of it for any reason or circumstance whatsoever.

In addition, with the exception of the pension decided and agreed upon between the Prior and M. Vincent, and which will be mentioned in fuller detail in the power of attorney of resignation of the Prior, on each and every one of the profits, benefits, revenues, and emoluments above, the pension will be free and clear and exempt from all ordinary or extraordinary tithes, loans, subsidies, repairs on the premises, and any other burdens and impositions, and

⁴Since the right of advowson of the priory was the privilege of the Archbishop of Paris, the resignation had to be made to him and not to the Pope. Realizing this later, Adrien Le Bon modified the contract on December 29, 1632.

will be paid by the priests to the Prior during his lifetime, at the usual periods, that is, at Easter, the feast of Saint John the Baptist, the feast of Saint Remi,⁵ and Christmas, paid quarterly in advance, the first payment beginning on the next of these dates following the taking of possession by the priests, and continuing from then on, from year to year and period to period;

To assure this pension, not only will the profits of the priory remain allocated for this, but also all the property and revenue of the Congregation, particularly the income of two thousand livres mortgaged debenture they have on the Hôtel de Ville of Paris. In addition, they will give and furnish the Prior with an authenticated guarantee from Father de Gondi, by which he will be constituted surety, guarantor, and fidejussor of the pension;

Likewise, there is the responsibility to provide the aforesaid Prior with an appropriate, valid, and irrevocable power of attorney as the appointed and peaceful possessor of the simple Benedictine priory of Sainte-Marie-Madeleine de Limouron in the Chartres diocese, contracted for four hundred livres a year, all charges paid, according to the lease drawn up for next year, which M. Vincent will be bound and has promised to have respected in such a way that the Prior may be provided with it and have the peaceful, full enjoyment of it, with no disturbance;

Likewise, exception is made of all that belongs and will belong to the priory until the day of the possession. The Prior can collect, take from, and be paid by the debtors, and use for this purpose every means required in such cases, even under the name of the Congregation, and confine and apply it all to his private use, even the price of provisions that will be found in the above-mentioned house at the time of the taking possession, including wheat, wine, and wood, for which the Priests of the Mission will be bound to pay and reimburse him, according to the judgment of persons who are knowledgeable in this matter. All of this will be to compensate the Prior in some way for the advances made by him for the needs of the house and from the balance of its accounts, of which he will remain free and

⁵The birthday of Saint John the Baptist is celebrated on June 24; the feast of Saint Remi, Bishop of Reims (c. 437-c. 533) is October 1.

clear, likewise of the management and administration made by him of the temporal revenue of the aforesaid priory since the time it was entrusted to him until the day of possession;

And reciprocally, neither the priory nor the Priests of the Mission are indebted to the Prior; from this time on, he may not claim, require, or demand the advances and balance of accounts in any way or kind whatsoever, but, at the time of the aforesaid possession, will leave the priory free and clear of all debts. With regard to the income invested during the time of the Prior for the profit of the priory, he will enjoy and receive it, in addition to the above, during his lifetime, and neither the priests nor others may have any share in it nor even less claim restitution from him or prevent him from freely receiving it, other than that, after the death of the Prior, they will remain entrusted with it and will have full ownership of it. And because the price of the farms of the priory and most of the fees and annuities are not due and handed over until the feasts of Saint Remi and Saint Martin,⁶ it is proper for the Prior, while awaiting that time, to get some money from his friends to make advances on the expenditures of the priory, including the upkeep of the church, house, farms, and dependencies, as well as for food, maintenance, and heating for the religious and servants in the house and other similar necessities, it having been agreed that the Prior will be reimbursed for the price of the farms, taxes, and annuities due, in proportion to the advance he may have made at the time of the actual possession by the Priests of the Mission;

Upon the deaths of the Prior and the religious residing at Saint-Lazare, the aforesaid priests will be bound to have them interred like all their benefactors. Every year, on the anniversary of the death of the Prior, they will say and have celebrated in perpetuity for the repose of his soul a solemn service in the priory church, and, to perpetuate this for posterity, will erect a tablet in the church, on which the obligation of the solemn service will be inscribed;

The above-mentioned priests will also be bound and obliged to conduct and have celebrated annually two solemn services for the

⁶Saint Martin of Tours, November 11.

founders, benefactors, and religious of Saint-Lazare. The first is to be celebrated on the first free day after the octave of the Epiphany,⁷ and the other on the Monday after Trinity Sunday. For the aforesaid religious, the priests will conduct a service on the anniversary of the death of each;

Likewise, the religious who now reside at Saint-Lazare will be allowed to remain and reside there as in the past, for as long as they live, under the jurisdiction of and obedience to the Archbishop of Paris, and to occupy the apartments on the main street of the faubourg, now used by M. Maheut, and other places in the priory that are most suitable, so that they may be well and comfortably housed. They will leave free possession of the dormitory and cloister to the Priests of the Mission, reserving no part of these for themselves. The Priests of the Mission will be bound to give, pay, and furnish each of the religious with five hundred livres a year for their food and clothing, either quarterly or otherwise, as the religious will desire or need. To facilitate payment of these pensions of both the Prior and the religious, the above-mentioned M. Vincent has consented, and does consent, that Cousin may continue to receive the revenue of the priory until possession of the priory by the Priests of the Mission be peaceful and stable. To this end, the aforementioned M. Vincent and the Priests of the Mission will give him all the necessary authorizations, when required, and they will remain irrevocable. In the event that the religious wish to eat in common with the priests, two hundred livres of the five hundred mentioned above will be deducted for their meals, and the remainder will be paid them to meet their other needs.

In case of illness, the Prior and the religious can be treated in the common infirmary at the expense of the above-mentioned priests, including the cost of physicians, druggists, surgeons, medicines, and meals, but only up to two hundred livres a year.

The religious may live privately in the priory, if they wish; if not, they may go where they choose, provided it be in a house of a religious Order, some benefice or office, or elsewhere, but always with

⁷January 6. (In some countries today, the feast is celebrated on the Sunday between January 2 and January 8).

the permission of the Archbishop of Paris; and the sum of five hundred livres will still be paid to them, just as if they were remaining in the house. The Priests of the Mission will give as a guarantee of the aforesaid pensions and subsidies the backing of Father de Gondi, in addition to the obligation and mortgage of their assets.

Upon the death of any of these religious, the aforesaid priests will be released from payment of the above sum, and no other religious or novices may be received or admitted into the priory in their place and stead for any reason or circumstance whatsoever. In the event of death, the furniture left by the deceased will return to and be left for the benefit and use of the other religious surviving him, who remain in the priory and make it their actual and personal residence, and, after all the religious, to the Priests of the Mission.

Likewise, the latter priests, at the time of the taking possession, will take up their actual and personal residence in the priory and will celebrate the divine service there in a worthy manner for the glory of God and to satisfy their conscience, as they are accustomed to do. They will also take responsibility for an inventory of all the vestments, reliquaries, furnishings, and other things belonging to the priory, which will be given and handed over to them for this purpose by the Prior and the religious; they will see to the upkeep and any repairs of the houses and farms, and will not oblige either the Prior or the religious to contribute to this in any way or form whatsoever. The priests will even take in and house lepers, if any present themselves afterward, and will take care of all their spiritual and physical needs, but will not deduct for this purpose anything whatsoever from the legacies and pensions.

Should the Priests of the Mission leave the said Saint-Lazare Priory—provided this not occur by the action or fault of the religious—they will not claim or demand anything on the advances of money they may have given to the Prior and the religious, not even for the buildings and other things done, defrayed, and disbursed by them in any way whatsoever, taking into account the use the priests have had and should have of all the income of the priory in the aforementioned offices, as soon as they take possession.

In case of the departure of the priests from the priory, the present contract will have no effect, and the priests and religious will have their rights and privileges restored as they were formerly.

Likewise, the priests will maintain all the leases drawn up on things dependent on the priory and will not sign any new ones nor fill the legal offices which the priory has the right to fill, including bailiff, court clerk, sergeants, and others, except in the presence, and with the advice and consent, of the Prior.

Likewise, they will see to and pursue any legal proceedings pending and instituted at the time, and will pay all the necessary expenses required for this, discharging any obligations in them on the part of the Prior as well as the religious, by taking on the expenses for them, if any are imposed.

And since the operation and full completion of the union may take a long time, and consequently the holy and devout plan of the Prior and the religious may also be deferred for a long time, the Priests of the Mission will enter the said priory and occupy the premises of the cloister, complying with and fulfilling beforehand, point by point, what is contained in the present letters at the time they are drawn up and signed, and are confirmed and approved by the Archbishop of Paris. They will assume all the expenses necessary to proceed with, come into possession of, and be granted the said union in the court of Rome, as well as its confirmation and approval in the Parlement and wherever else will be necessary. In consideration of the above, the Priests of the Mission will take, receive, collect, and limit to their use all the profits, benefits, income, and emoluments of Saint-Lazare Priory, in any way and manner whatsoever, excluding or retaining none of them outside of those reserved above, which the Prior, religious, and convent have released to them from now on as then, and from then until now, and have relinquished, and do relinquish, in order to endow and invest the Priests of the Mission with them, substituting them in their place and stead, having need of no broader investiture than the present letters.

In addition, the Archbishop of Paris and his Vicar-General will always have every manner of jurisdiction, superiority, and authority over the house as before the present contract.

In the event that all of the above, for whatever cause or circumstance, should not take place and have its full and entire effect, in that case the Prior will cede back or resign Limouron Priory to M. Barreau, now provided with it.

By two weeks from today, the Priests of the Mission, at their expense, will furnish the Prior and each of the religious with a copy of the present contract in the proper form, for the Prior, the religious, and Vincent have promised and respectively agreed to uphold it, under penalty of all expenses and damages, obliging and renouncing, etc.

In witness whereof, upon the report of the said notaries, we have had the seal of the office of Provost of Paris affixed to these present letters, which were drawn up and signed in the Chapter hall of Saint-Lazare Priory on the afternoon of Wednesday, January 7, 1632, and the undersigned notaries have signed the draft of the present letters, which has remained in the possession of Païsant, one of them.

DESNOTZ

PAÏSANT

78. - ENTRANCE OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION INTO SAINT-LAZARE

(January 8, 1632)

In the year 1630, Messire Adrien Le Bon, religious of the Order of Canons Regular of Saint Augustine and Prior of Saint-Lazare, had some difficulty with his religious, which led him to want to exchange the priory for another benefice. Several persons encouraged him to do so, offering him abbeys and other income-bearing benefices, but, when he shared this plan with friends, they dissuaded him from it, saying that he might find a solution for the disagreement he

Document 78. - According to Abelly (cf. *op. cit.*, bk. I, chap. XXII, pp. 95ff.), the report published here was written by Guillaume de Lestocq in October 1660 at the request of René Alméras, who edited it. The account of the Pastor of Saint-Laurent, as he himself wrote it, is known to us from one of the volumes of the process of beatification.

had with his religious by discussing it with them, in the presence of four Doctors. He consented to this, and his religious agreed to it.

The meeting took place at the residence of a Doctor highly respected for his merits and holiness. The Prior put forward his grievances, and then heard the reply of the Subprior, who spoke for the religious. After that, the order was given for a way of life and a Rule to be drawn up and followed in the future.

Even after this was done, the Prior still wanted to leave his priory. Having heard of some good priests who were devoting themselves to giving missions under the leadership of M. Vincent, whom he did not know, the thought occurred to him that, if he established them in the priory, he could share in the great good they were doing in the Church. He inquired where they were living; when he was told where it was, he asked me, as his good friend and neighbor, to go there with him. I gladly did so, pointing out to him that he could do nothing better and that this thought could only have come from heaven, which had raised up those good priests for the benefit of the rural areas. They were greatly needed there for the instruction the village folk were receiving from them and because the latter were telling their sins in the tribunal of confession, freely and entirely opening their consciences there and revealing what they had not dared to tell the local confessors, either because they were not questioned on it or because of their shame in making it known. I was able to speak about this and assure him of it because of having been there with them and having experienced it; furthermore, he would find in their Company a man of God, who was their Director, meaning by this M. Vincent, as he himself would acknowledge.

So, together we went to the Collège des Bons-Enfants, contiguous to the Porte Saint-Victor, where the Prior spoke with M. Vincent and explained to him the reason that had brought him there, namely, that people had spoken very highly of his Congregation and the charitable works to which it was devoting itself for the poor country people. The Prior stated that he would be happy to be able to contribute something to this and that he had the Saint-Lazare house, which he would willingly hand over to them for such a worthy ministry.

Such an advantageous offer amazed that humble servant of God and had the same effect on him as an unexpected thunderbolt which suddenly surprises a man and leaves him dumbfounded. When the good Prior saw this, he said to him: "Monsieur, you are trembling!" "It is true, Monsieur," the other replied, "that your proposal terrifies me, and it seems so far above us that I would not dare to consider it. We are poor priests who live simply with no other intention than to serve the poor country people. We are most grateful to you, Monsieur, for your good will, and we thank you very humbly for it." In a word, he showed that he had no inclination to accept this offer, and refused it so strongly that he eliminated all hope of our coming back to see him about the matter. Still, the gentle, affable reception he was given by M. Vincent so touched the heart of M. Le Bon that he could not alter his plan and told him he would give him six months to think it over.

When that time had elapsed, he asked me again to go with him. He begged him to kindly accept his priory and said that God was inspiring him more and more to place it in his hands. For my part, insisting also on this, I asked M. Vincent not to pass up such a fine opportunity. None of that changed either his mind or his feeling. He remained firm, citing their small number, the fact that they were just starting out, that he did not want people talking about him, that it might cause a fuss, that he did not like to make a commotion, and, lastly, that he did not deserve this favor from the Prior. Whereupon, hearing the dinner bell ring, M. Le Bon told M. Vincent that he would like to dine with him and his community. And, in fact, he did have dinner there, and so did I. The reserve of those priests, the excellent reading, and the good order pleased M. Le Bon so much, and he felt such veneration and love for them, that he continued to have me appeal to M. Vincent. I did so more than twenty times in the space of six months, to the point that, being a very good friend of M. Vincent, I told him several times that he was resisting the Holy Spirit and would have to answer to God for this refusal because, by this means, he could be established and form a body and a Congregation perfect in all its circumstances.

I cannot say how strongly we insisted on this. Jacob did not have as much patience in pursuit of Rachel nor insist so strongly on getting the blessing of the angel than the Prior and I did to get a “yes” from M. Vincent, whom we were urging to grant us this acceptance. We cried out more loudly after him than the Canaanite woman did after the Apostles. Finally, after a year had passed, the Prior ventured to go to him and say: “Monsieur, what kind of a man are you? If you want nothing to do with this business, at least tell us who is advising you, in whom you have confidence, what friend you have in Paris to whom we can go to reach some agreement on it. For I have the consent of all my religious, and all I need is yours. No one who wishes your well-being would advise you not to accept what I am offering you.”

So M. Vincent directed him to M. André Duval, Doctor of the Sorbonne, who was a holy man and had even written the lives of several saints. “We will do what he advises us,” he said.

The Prior did indeed go to see him. They went over this plan together, agreed on the conditions, and, on January 7, 1632, the contract was signed between the Prior and the religious of Saint-Lazare on the one hand, and M. Vincent and the priests of his Congregation on the other. It was by this means that M. Vincent finally yielded to the pressures put on him—by me among others—and I can truly say that in those circumstances that “my throat was parched.”¹ I would willingly have borne this father of the Missionaries on my shoulders to carry him to Saint-Lazare to get him to accept it, but he was considering neither externals nor the advantages of the place and all that depends on it, and during that whole time he did not even come to see it. So, it was not its excellent situation that attracted him to it, but only the Will of God and the spiritual good he could do there. Having then accepted it for this motive alone, after resisting in every way imaginable, he came there the next day, January 8, 1632, and everything went off smoothly to the satisfaction of the whole household. This shows that the finger of God is here² and that it is

¹ *My jaws are become hoarse.* Cf. Ps 69:4. (D-RB); *my throat is parched.* Cf. Ps 69:4. (NAB)

² Cf. Ex 8:15; Lk 11:20. (NAB)

the Promised Land to which Abraham was led—I mean M. Vincent, a true Abraham, the great servant of God—to fill the earth with blessing, and his family will subsist throughout the ages.

**79. - APPROVAL BY THE ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS
OF THE UNION OF SAINT-LAZARE
TO THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION**

(January 8, 1632)

Jean-François de Gondi, by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See, Archbishop of Paris, Councillor to our most Christian King of France and of Navarre in his Councils of State and for Sacred Affairs, and Grand Master of the Royal Chapel, to all who will read and hear the present letters, sends greetings in the Lord.

Among the other duties whereby, in virtue of our archiepiscopal dignity, we are able to guide into the way of eternal salvation the sheep entrusted to us, we must give the utmost importance to continuous zeal and care in traveling through the villages, where the harvest is abundant, but the laborers are few,¹ sowing the Word of God, and, after the example of the holy Apostles and disciples of Christ the Lord, carrying out the work of the missions. Since, however, it is impossible for us to fulfill this task by ourselves because of the many heavy duties for the salvation of the flock entrusted to us, nothing should be more important to us than to choose persons outstanding in doctrine, eminent in piety, on fire with zeal for the love of God and the salvation of souls, and who are the good odor of Christ, in order that we may entrust to them this afflicted region, which has been nearly abandoned by everyone.

And indeed, in His very great mercy, God has raised up in our times in this kingdom of France the priest Maître Vincent de Paul and the members of his Congregation, most profitable workers and apostolic men very dedicated to Christian humility, whom we have sent to this work to minister successfully in procuring the sal-

Document 79. - Arch. Nat., M 212, original, written in Latin.

¹Cf. Mt 9:37. (NAB)

vation of souls. They have devoted themselves to it by divine inspiration, leaving those who live in the cities, where there are many secular and regular priests, in order to give themselves wholeheartedly to the salvation of souls, going instead, with a special purpose, to various parts of our diocese, seeking the interests of Jesus Christ. They remain for a time in each village, not using persuasive words of human wisdom, but manifesting spirit and truth, zealously exhorting everyone to make a general confession of all the sins of their past life, assiduously hearing confessions, recommending frequent reception of the Eucharist, and instructing in the Christian virtues those who are ignorant, so as to rid them of the depraved morals and abuses of the people. In each parish, they establish by our authority a confraternity to alleviate the needs of the poor and sick in a prescribed manner, and to prepare the people so that we may make fruitful parish visitations. In fine, they urge everyone, by word and example, to despise vice and strive after virtue, as almost all the illustrious and discerning people of the entire kingdom of France can attest.

It was our great concern, therefore, to give God, the Author of all good things, the many thanks we should, as we do even daily, for having provided for the needs of His Church of France at the opportune time and given us such diligent auxiliaries to sustain us in our pastoral duties. It was also in accord with our pastoral providence to entreat the same Supreme God to see that nothing necessary be lacking to such useful workers, who seem called by God to the outstanding Institute of this Congregation of the Mission, and who, without any stipend, expecting a reward from God alone, spend themselves wholly for the salvation of the country people by assiduous vigils and indefatigable work. God has heard our prayers, and in His infinite goodness has answered them favorably; for, although we had long tried in vain to establish some fixed, stable residence for them in the Paris diocese, the matter turned out exactly as we desired.

In fact, there was a certain man especially zealous for the salvation of souls, whose name is Adrien Le Bon, a professed religious of the Order of Saint Augustine, Prior or Administrator of the house and leprosarium of Saint-Lazare in our Paris diocese, in the fau-

bourg Saint-Denis of the city of Paris. It was the will of our predecessor Cardinal de Retz, the most eminent Henri de Gondi,² of happy memory, to entrust to him the administration of the revenue from the management of the aforementioned leprosarium, whose disposition by full right pertains and belongs to us by reason of archiepiscopal dignity.³ When the religious of this same house saw the very rich results derived from the missions of this Congregation, not only for this diocese of ours, but for all of France, they themselves asked us to have an acceptable contract presented to them for our agreement to the consent they gave regarding the union of the aforesaid house and administration of the leprosarium, and of all things pertaining to it, to the Community of the Congregation of the Mission, upon which, as they state, they mutually agreed.

Since, moreover, by very certain knowledge and experience, we know that all people of every rank, especially those living in the villages, will receive very great benefit from this union, we cannot resist the prayers and justifiable petition of all of them.⁴

Wherefore, subject to the good pleasure of our Most Holy Lord the Pope and of our Most Christian King of France and of Navarre, from whom the Priests of the Mission will procure the Bulls and letters necessary for this, we have approved and do now approve the agreement that the Saint-Lazare house and the administration of the leprosarium of our Paris diocese be united with the Community of the secular priests of the Congregation of the Mission, throughout the towns and villages of this same diocese, with the cessation of religious life.⁵

²Henri de Gondi, first Cardinal de Retz. (cf. I, 249, n. 3).

³By these words, the Archbishop of Paris is registering his protest against the phrase of the contract whereby Adrien Le Bon places the administration of the priory "into the hands of our Holy Father the Pope" (cf. Doc. 77, n. 4).

⁴The preceding section of the text, from the second paragraph up to this point, is repeated verbatim in Document 83. The latter, dated December 31, 1632, is the second approval given by the Archbishop of Paris; it was required by the Parlement because of some problems with the wording of the January 8 document.

⁵The original Latin text uses the term *Extinctio regularitatis* [with the cessation of religious life], which refers to the fact that the previous occupants of Saint-Lazare were *Regulars* (Canons Regular of St. Augustine). The Priests of the Mission were secular priests living in community, but not members of a religious Order (Regulars). When they moved into Saint-Lazare, their order of the day supplanted that of the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine.

We also approve the agreement that pensions be created, with certain conditions subject to the good pleasure of the same Supreme Pontiff, on the revenues of the house and leprosarium, to be paid to Le Bon, the Prior and Administrator, and to the religious, on the terms to which they mutually agreed.

We approved, however, and do now approve the aforementioned agreements under the conditions set down as follows: in particular, that we and our successors, the Archbishops of Paris, have, as previously, complete jurisdiction and authority and the right of visitation, in spiritual as well as in temporal matters, of the house, leprosarium, and members of the aforesaid Congregation living in it,⁶ and that these same Priests of the Mission be bound to recite the Divine Office in choir, aloud without chant, according to their custom, as well as to fulfill all the foundations of the Saint-Lazare house, to admit lepers into this leprosarium, to have in residence there at least twelve members of the Congregation, of whom at least eight are priests residing there continually, yet with some necessary quiet time allowed for sustaining such heavy work, especially at harvest time, when the country people are busy gathering in the crops. They should spend their time traveling through the villages of the Paris diocese, at the expense of their Congregation, staying in individual villages for one or two months, according to the needs of the place, to teach the mysteries of faith, hear confessions—especially general confessions—instruct the more uninformed people in Christian matters, prepare souls for the worthy reception of the Most Holy Eucharist, arrange peace terms between persons at odds with one another, and perform other pious works according to our will and order and that of our successors, which will be prescribed by us and our successors.

Next, at the times when Orders are usually conferred in Paris, these same members of the Mission will be bound, without prejudice to the missions, to admit all the candidates for Orders from the Paris diocese who will be sent to them by us, and to provide whatever is necessary for their food and accommodation for the

⁶Vincent de Paul managed to be dispensed from this condition.

two-week period before the actual ordination days. They will also engage them in spiritual exercises such as general confession, daily examination of conscience, meditations on the change of their state of life, and all matters proper to each Order and appropriate to the clergy, as well as the proper observance of the ceremonies of the Church.

If, however, the union of the Saint-Lazare house and leprosarium with the Community of the Congregation of the Mission should not take place, we direct that Adrien Le Bon, Prior or Administrator of the house and leprosarium, and the religious should remain in the same state in which they were previously, and that the aforesaid Le Bon should carry out the administration, as previously, of the house and leprosarium, according to the mandate given him by our predecessor, the Most Reverend Henri de Gondi, Cardinal de Retz.

Nevertheless, if, for any cause or pretext whatsoever, the administration of the Saint-Lazare leprosarium should be erected as a benefice, contrary to law and our intention and prejudicial to the union, or if, perchance—God forbid—the Priests of the Mission are unwilling to allow clerics of the Paris diocese, wishing to be promoted to Holy Orders, to be instructed in the way that has been indicated, or refuse to perform missionary functions in the villages of the Paris diocese; in those cases or in any one of them, we direct that they be stripped totally of everything we and our predecessors have held for the priorship and administration of the Saint-Lazare leprosarium and that it be returned to us and to our successors, the Archbishops of Paris, who will be able to entrust to anyone they wish the power to exercise complete jurisdiction and authority in spiritual as well as in temporal affairs, as they had previously done.

We desire, moreover, that the person responsible for presenting our agreement for establishing the aforesaid union on the conditions stated above be our proxy in this matter, and make known our will and intention in the Roman Curia before His Holiness the Pope, or elsewhere, and that this same person strongly entreat our Most Reverend Lord on our behalf to receive with kindly countenance, and embrace and honor with favors, those distinguished men who

are destined to receive an unfading crown of glory from God. These are men who labor to the utmost of their ability in the vineyard of the great *paterfamilias*, which has been entrusted to the same Most Holy Lord. May he on whom divine favor rests deign to bestow his blessing on them and on me, and may the same God who began the good work in them, strengthen and perfect it.

In fidelity to and in witness whereof, we have ordered these present letters, signed in our own hand, to be drawn up and signed by the secretary and authenticated by affixing to them the seal of our chancery.

Given and executed in Paris, January 8, 1632.

FRANÇOIS, Arch[bishop] of Paris

By mandate of my aforementioned Lord, the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Archbishop of Paris.

BAUDOUYN

**80. - LETTERS PATENT CONFIRMING THE UNION
OF SAINT-LAZARE
TO THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION**

(January 1632)

Louis, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, to all present and to come, greetings.

Our beloved priests of the Congregation of the Mission have informed us and pointed out that Brother Adrien Le Bon, Prior of the conventual priory, leprosarium, and administration of the Canons Regular at Saint-Lazare, Order of Saint Augustine, and the religious of the priory, situated in the faubourg Saint-Denis of this our fine city of Paris, founded there to shelter and care for poor lepers, have seen that the disease has declined so much that there are at present no lepers in the priory, and they find themselves unable to practice toward them the charity they wished to exercise in confor-

mity with their Institute. Wanting, as far as in them lies, to assuage their conscience by rectifying this deprivation of good by another that is greater, they have finally resolved, after mature deliberation and having prayed in general and privately, to convert and apply the temporal revenue of the priory to make provision for and to assist spiritually the poor people of the rural areas, who are a long way from the cities and poorly instructed in the mysteries of our faith absolutely necessary for salvation. They think they cannot more worthily fulfill the intention of their founder than by substituting for the cure of the leprosy of sin what they had intended for the care of the bodies that had been tainted by it.

For this purpose, they turned to the priests of the Congregation of the Mission, whose sole concern is to devote themselves free of charge to the spiritual instruction of those poor people, in line with the contract drawn up this past January 7 between them and the Prior and the religious, by our good pleasure. On the said day, documents of power of attorney were drawn up to consent to the union of the priory, and the profits and revenues dependent on it, to the Congregation of the said priests. By a specific Act of the eighth of the said month and year, the Prior was given a special power of attorney, resigning the priory, leprosarium, and administration of Saint-Lazare, with their profits, revenues, and emoluments, to be united, annexed, and incorporated into the Congregation. By another power of attorney, of the tenth of the said month and year, the Prior also consented to the ratification of the Bulls that will be obtained for the said union; all the Acts were received by Desnotz and Paisant, notaries at the Châtelet.

This union has been approved by our dear loyal Councillor in our Councils and Grand Master of our Chapel, the Archbishop of Paris, on condition that the Priests of the Mission receive and maintain in the priory poor lepers of the city of Paris, if any present themselves hereafter. Besides the work of the missions, the priests of the Congregation will also be bound to receive in the priory the ordinands of the diocese who will be sent to them by the Archbishop to be formed, instructed, prepared, and rendered competent of receiving worthily the Orders to which they desire to be promoted, and they

will even provide room and board for them in the priory for two weeks, free of charge. If, however, we were not pleased to grant them letters of declaration of our will and intention regarding this matter, which they humbly request, they might fear in the future being disturbed in the enjoyment of the priory.

For these reasons, having read in our Council the contract and powers of attorney of the aforementioned Prior and the religious, together with the consent of the Archbishop, here attached with the counterseal of our chancery, and having been personally informed of the excellent results the priests of the Congregation of the Mission have realized in various provinces of our kingdom since their establishment in it, and those they are also achieving daily for the glory of God and the salvation of the souls of many of our subjects, and that even a year ago some of the priests were sent by their Superior to the Montauban diocese, where they work constantly to uproot heresy in the places that are most tainted by it;

We, on the advice of our Council and by our special privilege, full rights, and royal authority, have praised, accepted, confirmed, and approved, and do praise, accept, confirm, and approve by these present letters, signed by our hand, the aforesaid contract of union of the priory, leprosarium, or administration of Saint-Lazare to the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission. We will, and it is our pleasure, that they and their successors enjoy in perpetuity all the profits, rights, revenues, and emoluments belonging to it, with the responsibilities, clauses, and conditions of the aforesaid contract and the approval of the Archbishop, which we will to produce their full and entire effect.

Therefore, we give orders to our beloved and loyal Councillors holding court in our Parlement of Paris, the local Provost, his Lieutenant, and our other dispensers of justice and officers concerned, to record in the registers of our court these present letters and what is contained in them, to be enjoyed and used by the aforementioned priests of the Congregation of the Mission fully, peacefully, and forever, placing no hindrance or disturbance to them, nor allowing any hindrance or disturbance to be done against them contrary to

this. And that it may be a firm and stable fact, we have had our seal placed on these present letters.

Given in Metz, in the month of January, in the year of grace 1632, the twenty-second of our reign.

LOUIS

DE LOMÉNIE

**81. - *SALVATORIS NOSTRI*, BULL OF ERECTION
OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION**

(Now Doc. 84a)

**81a. - DOCUMENT RELATIVE TO THE PONTIFICAL APPROVAL
OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION**

(Vol. I, no. 94a.)

**82. - DECLARATION OF ADRIEN LE BON
ON THE CONTRACT OF JANUARY 7, 1632**

(December 29, 1632)

Before the undersigned Jean Coustart and Étienne Paisant, royal notaries of our sire the King at his Châtelet of Paris, was present in person the esteemed Brother Adrien Le Bon, Prior and Administrator of the leprosarium of Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, living in that place. He stated and declared that, being more and more edified by the exemplary life and outstanding charity practiced daily by the reverend Priests of the Mission, under the good, successful leadership of Reverend Father Vincent de Paul, Superior of the Congregation of those priests, he desires for this reason to contribute as best he can to their perpetual establishment in the Saint-Lazare house, in which

they have already been living for several months at the earnest entreaty and request of Brother Adrien Le Bon, with his consent and that of all the religious of the house. This is subject, however, to the clauses and conditions stated fully in the contract drawn up and signed between them before Desnotz and Païsant, notaries at the Châtelet, on January 7, 1632,¹ followed by letters patent of His Majesty issued in January 1632,² with the consent also of the Bishop of Paris, mediate and immediate Superior of the house, dated February 12 of this year,³ that of the Provost of Merchants and Magistrates of this city of Paris, dated March 24 of this same year 1632, for the specific confirmation of the contract, with its clauses and conditions, and, lastly, by two decrees of the members of our Parlement court, dated August 21 and September 7, 1632. By the first of these latter decrees, the court, disregarding the opposition of the Prior of Saint-Victor, proceeding in his own name, and the intervention of the Abbot of Quincy,⁴ ordained that it would read the aforementioned contracts and letters in order to comply with them when everything had been communicated to the Attorney General, as might seem fit. By the second and later of the decrees, the court ordained that the letters and contract should be recorded in its registers so that the applicants may enjoy the effect contained in them and that, to carry this out, they should obtain from the Archbishop of Paris letters of establishment in perpetuity, with other things stated more specifically in the said decree.

To comply with that decree and to proceed to the perpetual and irrevocable establishment of the Priests of the Mission in the house and administration of Saint-Lazare, with its rights, profits, benefits, revenues, and emoluments, in whatever these may consist, without exception, even in the possession, use, and disposal of all the vestments, chalices, vases, crosses, candlesticks, thuribles, cruets, relics, and other silver articles for the use of the church, together with all the utensils, furnishings, and other things in that house, except

¹Cf. Doc. 77.

²Cf. Doc. 80.

³This document and the following ones mentioned are no longer extant.

⁴Louis de Mesgrigny.

for those belonging to Brother Adrien Le Bon and the other religious who are now at Saint-Lazare, including vestments, silver chalices, and the furnishings with which the bedroom and living room of M. Le Bon are now furnished, which he has reserved, and does reserve; items to be used and disposed of by him and the religious as belonging to them, Brother Adrien Le Bon relinquished and abandoned and does relinquish and abandon even whatever might be necessary, and remits and resigns into the hands of the Archbishop of Paris, his Vicars-General, or others holding this power, the administration of that house which had been entrusted to him. He does so in order to give, transfer, and entrust it to the Priests of the Mission, under the leadership of Messire Vincent de Paul and his successors, Superiors of the Priests of the Mission, with the express responsibility, and not otherwise, for the pensions reserved to them and which they reserve during their lifetime, namely, twenty-one hundred livres for M. Le Bon, and five hundred livres for each of the religious; for the clauses, responsibilities, and conditions regarding the residence and lodging of M. Le Bon and the religious, reserved for them at Saint-Lazare during their lifetime; for other things M. Le Bon reserves from the Rougemont estate, and other things expressly mentioned in the contract of January 7, 1632, which will remain, and still remains in force and vigor, together with all the Acts signed in consequences of it, except what concerns the union that was to be made of that hospital to the Congregation in the Roman court. M. Le Bon relinquished and abandoned them in accord with what he has since been informed by the deeds of this Institution: that it was only a simple temporal administration, which could be entrusted to a lay person and therefore could not be validly united in the Roman court, and, for the security and inviolable maintenance of the rest of the contract, pensions, and reservations, with the express responsibility to have new submissions and obligations furnished again by Reverend Father de Gondi, who will be constituted guarantor, surety, and fidejussor of the residences, reservations, and pensions of M. Le Bon and the religious and to obtain new letters patent from His Majesty confirming the present letters and the latest consent of the Archbishop of Paris. He was to have all

this approved in the court so that the contract and all it contains, together with the present letters, will henceforth be perpetual, firm, and irrevocable, and may not be altered, violated, or evaded for any reason or circumstance whatsoever.

The present declaration has been accepted by the priest Messire Vincent de Paul, Superior of the Congregation, and Messires Jean Dehorgny, Jean Pillé,⁵ Antoine Lucas,⁶ Joseph Brunet,⁷ and Jean Cuisot,⁸ priests of the Congregation of the Mission, present and appearing here, who have claimed and requested the Act of the above, promising, etc., obliging, etc., renouncing, etc.

Drawn up and signed at Saint-Lazare Priory, in the office of the Prior, before noon of December 29, 1632. Messieurs Le Bon, de Paul, and the other persons named above, present and appearing, have signed the draft, which has remained with Paisant, one of the notaries.

COUSTART

PAISANT

83. - APPROVAL BY THE ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS OF THE UNION OF SAINT-LAZARE TO THE MISSION¹

(December 31, 1632)

Jean-François de Gondi, by divine grace the first Archbishop of Paris, Councillor to our most Christian King of France and of Navarre in his Councils of State and for Sacred Affairs, and Grand

⁵Jean Pillé (cf. II, 339, n. 5).

⁶Antoine Lucas (cf. V, 101, n. 6).

⁷Jean-Joseph Brunet (cf. III, 313, n. 1).

⁸No information is available for a confrere named Cuisot at the time this document was written by Adrien Le Bon. A Gilbert Cuisot entered the Congregation on May 14, 1637; his nephew Jean Cuisot, born in Moulins (Allier), entered the Congregation on November 28, 1642, at twenty-three years of age, and took his vows on November 11, 1644. Coste states that "he had left the Congregation and been readmitted." Chronologically, therefore, he could not have been the Jean Cuisot to whom Adrien Le Bon refers.

Document 83. - Arch. Nat., M 212, original, written in Latin.

¹Since the declaration of December 29, 1632, modified the contract of the preceding January 7 on an essential point, new documents had to be prepared, the first of which was this archiepiscopal approval, followed shortly after by new letters patent.

Master of the Royal Chapel, to all who will read and hear the present letters, sends greetings in the Lord.²

Among the other duties whereby, in virtue of our archiepiscopal dignity, we are able to guide the sheep entrusted to us into the way of eternal salvation, we must give the utmost importance to continuous zeal and care in traveling through the villages, where the harvest is abundant, but the laborers are few, sowing the Word of God, and, after the example of the holy Apostles and disciples of Christ the Lord, carrying out the work of the missions. Since, however, it is impossible for us to fulfill this task by ourselves because of the many heavy duties for the salvation of the flock confided to us, nothing should be more important to us than to choose persons outstanding in doctrine, eminent in piety, on fire with zeal for the love of God and the salvation of souls, and who are the good odor of Christ, to whom we may entrust this afflicted province, which has been nearly abandoned by everyone.

And indeed, God in His very great mercy, has raised up in our times in this kingdom of France the priest Maître Vincent de Paul and the members of his Congregation, most profitable workers and apostolic men very dedicated to Christian humility, whom we have sent to this work to minister successfully in procuring the salvation of souls. They have devoted themselves to it by divine inspiration, leaving those who live in the cities, where there are many secular and Regular priests, in order to give themselves wholeheartedly to the salvation of souls, going instead, with a special purpose, to various parts of our diocese, seeking the interests of Jesus Christ. They remain for a time in each village, not using persuasive words of human wisdom, but manifesting spirit and truth, zealously exhorting everyone to make a general confession of all the sins of their past life, assiduously hearing confessions, recommending frequent reception of the Eucharist, and instructing in the Christian virtues those who are ignorant, so as to rid them of the depraved morals and abuses of the people. In each parish, they establish by our authority a confraternity to alleviate the needs of the poor and sick in a pre-

²The following text, as far as "the prayers and justifiable petition of all of them" is taken verbatim from the first contract, dated January 8 (cf. Doc. 79).

scribed manner and to prepare the people so that we may make fruitful parish visitations. In fine, they urge everyone, by word and example, to despise vice and strive after virtue, as almost all the illustrious and discerning people of the entire kingdom of France can attest.

It was our great concern, therefore, to give God, the Author of all good things, the many thanks we should, as we do even daily, for having provided for the needs of His Church of France at the opportune time and given us such diligent auxiliaries to sustain us in our pastoral duties. It was also in accord with our pastoral providence to entreat the same Supreme God to see that nothing necessary be lacking to such useful workers, who seem called by God to the outstanding Institute of this Congregation of the Mission, and who, without any stipend, expecting a reward from God alone, spend themselves wholly for the salvation of the country people by assiduous vigils and indefatigable work. God has heard our prayers, and in His infinite goodness has answered them favorably; for, although we had long tried in vain to establish some fixed, stable residence for them in the Paris diocese, the matter turned out exactly as we desired.

In fact, there was a certain man especially zealous for the salvation of souls, whose name is Adrien Le Bon, a professed religious of the Order of Saint Augustine, Prior or Administrator of the house and leprosarium of Saint-Lazare of our Paris diocese, in the faubourg Saint-Denis of the city of Paris. It was the will of our predecessor Cardinal de Retz, the most eminent Henri de Gondi, of happy memory, to entrust to him the administration of the revenue from the management of the aforementioned leprosarium, whose disposition by full right pertains and belongs to us by reason of archiepiscopal dignity. When the religious of this same house saw the very rich results derived from the missions of this Congregation, not only for this diocese of ours, but for all of France, they themselves asked us to have an acceptable contract presented to them for our agreement to the consent they gave regarding the union of the aforesaid house and administration of the leprosarium, and of all things pertaining to it, to the Community of the Congregation of the Mission, upon which, as they state, they had mutually agreed.

Since, moreover, by very certain knowledge and experience, we know that all people of every rank, especially those living in the villages, will receive very great benefit from this union, we cannot resist the prayers and justifiable petition of all of them.

Wherefore, having seen the letters patent of our most Christian Lord Louis XIII, King of France and of Navarre, given in Metz this past January, in which he praised, approved, and consented to the permanent union of the aforesaid house or leprosarium of Saint-Lazare to the Congregation of secular priests of the Mission; likewise, the opinions of the highest court of Paris of this past August 21 and September 7, regarding the observance and execution of the contract drawn up and entered into between the Prior and the religious, Canons Regular of the Order of Saint Augustine, and Maître Vincent de Paul, in the presence of Maîtres Jean Desnotz and Étienne Paisant, royal notaries at the Châtelet of Paris, on Wednesday, the seventh of the aforesaid month of this past January;

Additionally, in the opinion and judgment of the Provost of Merchants and Magistrates of this city of Paris, who, negotiating on behalf of this same city, in accord with justice and equity, considered the union acceptable, and agreed to it this past March 24;

Having also taken into account the opinions concerning the aforesaid house or leprosarium, which we ourselves had discussed to this end; and having studied the conclusions of our Promoter, to whom all the aforesaid matters were communicated;

For these and other just and reasonable causes prompting us to be disposed toward this, and considering the excellent spiritual results the priests of the Congregation of the Mission have produced up to this point in the various provinces of this kingdom, especially in the Montauban diocese, by eradicating the Calvinist heresy, we, the Archbishop of Paris, for the greater praise and glory of Almighty God and the salvation of Christian souls, after the Prior willingly and freely resigned into our hands, abundantly and in all that may be necessary, the office of the priory and administration and every right belonging to him there, have united, applied, and annexed in perpetuity to Maître Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese, Superior of the Congregation of Priests of the Mission, and to

the Congregation itself, represented through him as its head, the houses, gardens, profits, revenues, proceeds, incomes, rights, and property of that hospice or leprosarium, of whatever kind and by whatever name they are called, and to the same Congregation and priests who are placed there and will be so in the future so that, in this way, they and their successors may be permitted to enjoy and take possession of these same things in perpetuity, fully, and peacefully.

For that purpose we have introduced and, by these present letters, do introduce them into the hospice or leprosarium of Saint-Lazare, near Paris, and constitute and establish them there in perpetuity and for the future, with the liberties, franchises, and privileges that this same hospice has used from of old, up to this time and hitherto, with no exceptions or reservations, subject to the burdens, reservations, clauses, guarantees, and conditions declared and expressed through the aforesaid royal letters given in Metz in January, the prescriptions of the Parlement of Paris of August 21 and September 7, and our letters of the past January 8, and subject to the other clauses and reserved conditions in the aforesaid contract and those things on which they have agreed. By the present letters, we agree and consent that those Priests of the Mission supply every year to Adrien Le Bon, the previous Prior, the sum of twenty-one hundred livres *tournois*, and also that he may convert to his own use the revenues and agreements of the estate or house commonly known as Rougemont, and receive an annuity. The Priests of the Mission are also bound to give five hundred livres annually to the rest of the religious living in the aforesaid house. In addition, so that the salvation of the religious and the observance of their vows may be taken into account, Brother Adrien Le Bon will fulfill the role of Superior of his own religious, see to their care, and keep his own administration; and we enjoin those professed religious to obey us and the Prior;

Moreover, we desire, approve, and confirm the union under the following conditions: first of all, that we and our successors the Archbishops of Paris have total jurisdiction, authority, and the right of visitation, in spiritual as well as in temporal matters, over the

aforesaid house or leprosarium and the members of the Congregation living in it, one of whom will be chosen from the Congregation as Superior, and that these same priests and seminarians of the Mission be bound to recite the canonical Divine Office in choir, in a moderate voice, without chant and with the doors of the choir closed, and to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in a low voice in order not to be detained from their duty and ministry of going through the villages; and the residents of the faubourgs of the city of Paris will have no reason to leave their own parishes but will instead be present in them for the Divine Office and the Sacrifice of the Mass which will be celebrated in them; that these same priests of the Congregation of the Mission will also be bound to fulfill all the foundations of that house and to admit lepers of the city of Paris, its inhabitants, University, and faubourgs;

That at least twelve members of the Congregation reside in this house or leprosarium, of whom at least eight will be priests of the Congregation and will reside there continuously. Nevertheless, some quiet time, necessary for sustaining such heavy work is permitted, especially at harvest time, when the country people are busy gathering in the crops. They should spend their time traveling through the villages of the diocese, at the expense of their Congregation, staying one or two months in individual areas, according to the need of the place, where they will teach the mysteries of faith, hear confessions—especially general confessions—instruct those ignorant of Christian matters, prepare souls for the worthy reception of the Eucharist, and arrange peace terms between persons at odds with one another. All this will be done according to our will and that of our successors and the order prescribed by us and our successors;

Next, at the times when Orders are usually conferred in Paris, these Priests of the Mission are bound, without prejudice to the missions that will also be taking place at that time, to admit candidates for Orders from the Paris diocese who will be sent to them by us, and to provide, for a two-week period before the actual date of Orders, what is necessary for room and board for those who will be engaged under their direction in spiritual exercises, namely, general

confession, daily examination of conscience, meditations on the change of their state of life, and those things proper to each Order and suitable to the clergy, along with the observance of the ceremonies of the Church.

Furthermore, so that those priests of the Congregation of the Mission might be able to meet and satisfy more promptly and conveniently the costs and necessary expenditures to be made in order to comply with all of the above, since those same Priests of the Congregation of the Mission promised and accepted this through Maître Vincent de Paul their Superior, we have granted, and do grant, perpetually and irrevocably by these present letters, that they may receive and apply to the proper uses of the Congregation of the Mission in Paris each and everything whatsoever that will be left over and remain from the expenditures, profits, revenues, proceeds, rights, annuities, incomes, and emoluments to be generally derived annually from the hospice or leprosarium. And, in view of the above, we have freed and exempted and do free and exempt the same Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, completely and for the future, from giving a financial report of this administration or of the profits, income, and revenue of the hospice or leprosarium and its annexes and dependencies.

Moreover, to commemorate this union of ours, created for the convenience and profit of the Congregation of the Mission, we will that annually, on the anniversary of this union of ours, each priest of the Congregation of the Mission be bound to celebrate one Mass for our well-being, that each will celebrate three Masses on the day of our death, and each year thereafter celebrate one Mass for the salvation and repose of our soul, and that all these things be engraved on a marble tablet as a perpetual memorial, to be placed in the choir of Saint-Lazare Church.

If, however, for any cause and pretext whatsoever prejudicial to this union, the administration of the Saint-Lazare leprosarium, contrary to the law and our intention, should be erected as a benefice, or if anyone in any way whatsoever should resign that leprosarium or the administration of Saint-Lazare, and if another by virtue of that resignation should claim it as his own and take possession of it, or if,

perchance—God forbid!—the Priests of the Mission should be unwilling to allow clerics of the Paris diocese desiring to be promoted to Sacred Orders, to be instructed in the manner mentioned above; or should they refuse to carry out the functions of the missions throughout the villages of the Paris diocese, in these instances and in any others whatsoever, we will that they be deprived of every right we and our predecessors had to the house and administration of Saint-Lazare and that it be returned to us and our successors the Archbishops of Paris, who, as previously, will be able at will to entrust the rule and administration of the aforementioned house to anyone they wish and to exercise full ecclesiastical jurisdiction and authority in spiritual as well as in temporal affairs, as they did previously.

In fidelity to and in witness whereof, we have ordered these present letters, signed in our own hand, to be drawn up and signed by the regular secretary of our archdiocese of Paris, authenticated by having the seal of our chancery affixed to them.

Given in Paris, the thirty-first and last day of December, 1632.

J. FRANÇOIS,
Archbishop of Paris

By mandate of the aforesaid Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Archbishop of Paris.

BAUDOUYN

**84. - LETTERS PATENT CONFIRMING THE UNION
OF SAINT-LAZARE TO THE MISSION**

(January 1633)

Louis, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, to all present and to come, greetings.

Our beloved Priests of the Congregation of the Mission have informed and made known to us that, by virtue of our letters patent at-

tached herein under the counterseal of our chancellery, given in Metz in January 1632¹ and bearing the approval and confirmation of the union of the priory, leprosarium, and administration of Saint-Lazare, situated in the faubourg Saint-Denis of our fine city of Paris, they had obtained a decree from our Parlement last August 21, whereby order was given that, disregarding the oppositions lodged to prevent that union, our court would examine, along with our letters, the contract for this union between the Prior and religious of Saint-Lazare and the priests of the Congregation of the Mission, in order to comply with it after everything had been transmitted to our Attorney General. In consequence of this, by another decree of the following September 7, our court had our letters and the contract registered so that the Priests of the Mission might enjoy the effect of them and what they contain. It also directed that, in order to carry it out, they should go to our beloved and loyal Councillor in our Councils and Grand Master of our Chapel, the Archbishop of Paris, to have him issue for them letters of establishment in perpetuity in the Saint-Lazare house.

In compliance with that decree, the Prior, by his declaration of this past December 30, received by Coustart and Païsant, notaries at the Châtelet, withdrew from and relinquished the administration of the Saint-Lazare house which had been consigned to him, and handed it over to the Archbishop to be given, transferred, and entrusted in perpetuity to the priests of the Congregation of the Mission, under the governance and leadership of M. Vincent de Paul, Superior of that house, and his successors in the future. In consequence of those decrees and the declaration of the Prior, the Archbishop united, annexed, and incorporated the Saint-Lazare house and leprosarium in perpetuity to the Priests of the Mission on the last day of the month of December. For the greatest surety and validity of the affair, they most humbly requested us to give them once again our letters of confirmation and approval of the union.

For these reasons, desiring on this occasion and on every other one that will arise, to manifest to the Priests of the Mission our esteem for their outstanding piety, good living, morals, and behavior,

¹Cf. Doc. 80.

and how pleased we are with the constant charity they practice in the instruction, conversion, and salvation of the souls of our subjects residing in the rural areas, we have had the aforementioned documents, attached under our counterseal, examined in our Council. By our special privileges, full power, and royal authority we praised, accepted, confirmed, and approved, and, by these present letters signed by our hand, do praise, accept, confirm, and approve that union effected by the Archbishop, of the priory, leprosarium, and administration of Saint-Lazare to the Congregation of the Mission. We will, and it pleases us, that those Priests of the Mission and their successors in the future should enjoy it in perpetuity, together with all profits, rights, revenues, and emoluments whatsoever belonging to it and dependent on it, with the responsibilities, reservations, clauses, and conditions stated in the contract and decrees and the declaration of the Prior, as well as the approval and union of the Archbishop, which we will to have its full and entire effect.

Today we give orders to our beloved and loyal Councillors, those holding court in our Parlement of Paris, the local Provost, his Lieutenant, and our other dispensers of justice and the officers concerned, to have these present letters registered and that the priests of the Congregation of the Mission enjoy and use what is contained in them fully, peacefully, and forever, placing no hindrance or disturbance to them, nor allowing any hindrance or disturbance to be done to them contrary to this. And that it may be a firm and stable fact, we have had our seal affixed to these present letters.

Given at Saint-Germain, in the month of January, in the year of grace 1633, the twenty-third year of our reign.

LOUIS

DE LOMÉNIE

**84a. - SALVATORIS NOSTRI, BULL OF ERECTION OF THE
CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION**

(January 12, 1633)

Urban, Bishop and Servant of the servants of God, to our beloved son, the Officialis of our venerable brother the Archbishop of Paris, greetings and apostolic benediction.

We, though unworthy, representing on earth our Savior the Lord Jesus Christ, Author of our salvation and Teacher of all knowledge leading to salvation, have at heart, as our pastoral office demands, the increase of divine worship, the spread of religion, and the salvation of souls. We embrace with fatherly affection the pious and salutary desires of all the faithful, but especially of those endowed with nobility of origin who freely donate their means to achieve these ends, and of those devout priests who give themselves to the service of God and the salvation of souls, desirous of establishing religious Congregations through which the uneducated can be instructed in the knowledge of God, salutary teachings and commandments instilled, and the practice of pious works procured, with the result that greater worship is given to God and salvation is brought to souls. We support these Congregations, granting them our approval and establishment, and other very special grants and favors, to the degree that we see in the Lord that these will help them flourish.

Document 84a. - Arch. Nat., M 209, original, written in Latin.

Subsequent to the publication of vol. XIII, Coste learned that Giovanni Mazzini, of the Vatican Library, had found a document in the Archives of the Congregation of Religious, which settled some vexing questions of chronology: the Bull *Salvatoris nostri*, for the erection of the Congregation of the Mission, had been issued "on the eve of the Ides of January, in the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord 1632, the tenth year of our pontificate." With the publication of Mazzini's discovery, in *Annales C. M.* (1926), pp. 140-44, it was noted that the "year of the Incarnation" began not on January 1 but on March 25. Therefore, the "eve of the ides of January, in the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord 1632" is actually January 12 of the civil year 1633. Furthermore, Urban VIII was elected Pope on August 5, 1623, so the "tenth year of our pontificate" would be 1633, making the date of *Salvatoris nostri* January 12, 1633. For this reason, the editors have repositioned this Bull as Document 84a.

After publishing this text, Coste had occasion to compare it with numerous copies. A number of minor variants were noted, and the corrections have been incorporated in this translation of the text.

Along these lines, the petition recently laid before us on behalf of our beloved sons, Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese in the province of Aquitaine, Superior General, and all the clerics, priests, and members of the Congregation called "of the Mission," of the city of Paris, contained the following: our beloved son, the noble gentleman Emmanuel de Gondi, Comte de Joigny, Prefect General of the Galleys of the whole kingdom of France, and our beloved daughter in Christ, the noble woman Françoise-Marguerite de la Rochepot, spouses, both had the following convictions: that instruction in the divine precepts and matters of the Catholic faith, assiduous preaching and hearing of the Word of God, frequentation of the sacrament of Penance, and worthy reception of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist are especially conducive to the salvation of all Christians; that those who live in the principal cities and towns have access to preachers, counselors, and directors who are men of notable learning and piety, inspiring them with their preaching, and teaching them all those things necessary for salvation with great approval and profit for souls; but those who live on the estates, on farms, in the countryside, in hamlets and in the more humble places, especially the peasants, do not get the same care and do not know the precepts of the Catholic faith, how to confess their sins devoutly and correctly, or all the things needed for salvation. These people need greater help, since their Pastors can hardly accomplish such a task; and as a result there is a deplorable loss of souls, for the sake of whose redemption Christ our God and Lord, having assumed our human flesh, deigned to undergo death on the cross.

They thought, therefore, that it would be most effective for the salvation of souls and most pleasing to the infinitely good and great God if a devoted Congregation of virtuous and capable men were established, who would have as their responsibility such instruction of the peasants and inhabitants of the countryside and hamlets, and of those places that are more deprived. For this purpose they donated from their own funds forty-five thousand livres *tournois* for the establishment and foundation of this Congregation, that is, its house in the city of Paris.

When this salutary resolution had been put into effect, the aforementioned Vincent, whom God the Author of all good had inspired with the same desire, began this apostolate which, although so important for a Christian state, had been undertaken by so few, and in this way he laid the foundation for this Congregation. By God's gracious Will, he soon found a good number of devout, generous priests desirous of joining such an Institute. Permission was obtained from our venerable brother Jean-François de Gondi, present Archbishop of Paris, who, solicitous for the salvation of the flock committed to his care, as a devout and vigilant Pastor should be, and hoping that from such a practical Institute the greatest fruits for the salvation of souls would be produced, encouraged its founders with his fatherly good will, strongly commending their devout intentions in the Lord. These men then took up residence in a certain house located in the city of Paris, which was suitable and practical for their purposes; there they lived—and still live—a common life under the authority and direction of the aforesaid Vincent, who was chosen or elected for life as Superior General of this house and Congregation, which is called Congregation of the Mission, and he prescribed that they observe the precepts and Rules written below.

The principal purpose and special goal of this Congregation and its members is, by the grace of God, along with their own salvation, to dedicate themselves to the salvation of those who live on the estates, in the countryside, on farms, in hamlets, and in insignificant places. In cities and towns, however, that are endowed with titles of archbishoprics, bishoprics, Parlements, and courts of assizes, the clerics and priests of this Congregation perform no public functions of their Institute; privately, they may, nevertheless, instruct those who are to be promoted to Orders and have been sent to them for a two-week period before ordination. So that these Orders may be received worthily, they make a spiritual retreat and a general confession of their whole lives; these priests also foster in them special devotion to the Most Holy Trinity, to the sacred mystery of the Incarnation, and to the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God.

Although the members of this Congregation are subject to the Superior General and other Superiors in matters pertaining to disci-

pline and direction, they are also subject to the local Ordinaries, but only in matters pertaining to the missions, insofar as the Ordinaries can send those designated by the Superiors to those parts of their dioceses that seem best to them.

In those places to which they are sent, they teach the uninstructed the commandments of God and the rudiments of Catholic doctrine, hear general confessions, administer the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, preach simple sermons that are easily understood by the people, and teach catechism. Beforehand, however, they obtain the permission of the Pastors, without which they may not become involved in the aforementioned ministries.

In places where they exercise the function of catechizing and preaching, they foster, under the authority of the Ordinary, the establishment of what are known as Confraternities of Charity to aid the sick poor. They also try with the greatest charity to settle and resolve quarrels, enmities, and divisions.

They receive into the houses of the aforesaid Congregation the Rectors of parish churches who wish to be helped in making their retreats and in governing their churches. Lastly, they do their best to have these Rectors meet together once a month, when this can be done conveniently by reason of proximity and without detriment to their responsibilities, to treat of cases of conscience and administration of the sacraments. They offer all these services free of charge and with no hope of any human recompense, expecting only a divine reward.

Furthermore, the Congregation shall consist of laymen, clerics, and priests. The laymen, restricted to the duties of Martha, shall take care of household affairs. Clerics shall be received no younger than seventeen or eighteen years of age. If, after completing a year of probation, they have been judged suitable and intend to remain in the Congregation for the rest of their lives, they can be incorporated into the Congregation and admitted as members. They will participate daily in the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, frequent the sacrament of Penance, and receive the sacrament of the Eucharist weekly. The priests, however, shall celebrate Mass daily. But everyone, priests as well as the others, shall meditate for an entire hour and also make use of the examination of conscience.

After the death of the aforesaid Vincent, another Superior General shall be elected from the body of the Congregation by this same Congregation. This Superior General shall then have complete authority and superiority to appoint all other Superiors as well as lesser officials, in any of the houses of the Congregation; to remove and transfer them; and to visit and correct houses, affairs, and persons of this Congregation, which Superiors General of other similar Congregations have, can have, or will be able to have, over the houses, affairs, and persons of their Congregations.

And so, from the very beginning of this same Congregation of the Mission, its priests have been engaged with untiring energy of mind and body in traveling around the Paris diocese, staying one or two months in each hamlet and village; concentrating on the planned instruction of the country people and the uneducated; teaching them the Commandments of God, the rudiments of the Catholic faith, and how to confess their sins correctly and with devotion; catechizing; preaching to them frequently about the mysteries of faith; administering the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist; giving thorough instructions to the Rectors of parish churches and other priests about matters pertaining to their office, urging those who do not live far apart to get together from time to time to discuss and treat of cases of conscience and the administration of the sacraments; helping them not only by their presence at these meetings and discussions but also by their actual participation in their ministry; seeing to the establishment of Confraternities of Charity; and bringing about settlements and reconciliations in quarrels and enmities.

For this reason, those to be promoted to Sacred Orders have been welcomed into their house in Paris in the way prescribed and have been instructed with charity and diligence in the importance of the Orders they are to receive and the manner of receiving them worthily. Various other spiritual works in accord with their Institute have been performed by the members of this Congregation and continue to be performed by them without interruption.

From these gratifying accomplishments it seems clear that this devoted Institute is not only very acceptable to God but also very ef-

fective and absolutely necessary for the people, for, because of it, the use of sacramental confession—even general confessions—and of the Most Holy Eucharist, previously rare, has by the grace of God become frequent in a relatively short time. Confraternities of Charity have been established in many places for the relief of the sick. It is well known that clandestine marriages have been convalidated, public sins have been corrected, and stolen goods have been restored. Places of worship are noticeably kept much more beautiful. Church ceremonies are performed more carefully. It is clear that the Divine Office is performed and attended with a sense of greater devotion and that many other spiritual blessings have been realized.

Because of this, the reputation of this devout Institute throughout France has led many Bishops of various jurisdictions and provinces to call to their dioceses some priests and members of the Congregation of the Mission, whose services they have used with great effectiveness to animate their subjects to the practice of virtue and devotion; in other areas, many have earnestly requested new foundations of houses of this Congregation. In order to satisfy their devout and laudable desire, and so that the spread of this effective Institute may be hoped for—or better, it would seem, procured—our approval and that of the Holy See has been seen as a step to be anticipated.

Since, however, as this petition adds, experience has shown that the greatest results have come from this Institute, and it is hoped that these very happy beginnings will bring about even happier progress in the future, and since those Institutes that are strengthened by the protection of the aforesaid See are more firmly established, it was humbly asked of us, on behalf of Vincent and the aforesaid clerics, priests, and members, that we deign by apostolic kindness to approve the Congregation and to respond appropriately to the other matters mentioned in the petition.

We, therefore, who sincerely desire to see divine worship flourish, religion extended, Church ministers increased, zeal for souls enkindled, and pious works multiplied, absolve Vincent and the clerics, priests, and members of the Congregation, considering both their physical persons, singularly and collectively, to be absolved in

the future—but only to the extent necessary to make these present letters effective—from all ecclesiastical judgments, censures, and penalties imposed on them, automatically or by a judge, on whatever occasion and for whatever cause, if any of these persons are burdened by such. Through this apostolic writing we commission you, in your discretion, by our authority, to approve and confirm forever this Congregation of the Mission; its Institute and Rules and everything contained in them; all the things and everything that has been done by the Congregation, its members, and persons, in obedience to and in observance of the Institute; the election and installation of the said Vincent as Superior General for life of the Congregation of the Mission, already carried out as stated above; to add to these things the stability of inviolable apostolic firmness, and to remedy each and every defect of law or fact, defects of formalities, even substantial ones and those required by law, and any other defects whatsoever if there happen to be any.

And for greater surety, we also commission you once again in your discretion, perpetually, with this same authority of ours, and without prejudice to the Pastors, parochial rights, or the rights of anyone else, to set up and establish in the city of Paris and in the house in which this Congregation of the Mission has been instituted, as mentioned above, a Congregation of the aforesaid Institute. It shall be called the Congregation of the Mission, and shall consist of laymen, clerics, and priests, who are bound to observe and fulfill the Institute and all that is contained in its Rules and Statutes, and are obliged to be subject, in matters of discipline and direction, to the aforesaid Vincent, whom we appoint once again, by the apostolic authority of these letters, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission as long as he shall live, and, after the death of the said Vincent, to be subject to the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission while he is in office, who must be elected from its members; however, in regard to the missions only, they are obliged to be subject to the local Ordinaries also, as stated above. In other matters the Superior General will have complete superiority and authority over all the houses of the Congregation of the Mis-

sion, wherever they have been established or will be established, and over their affairs, Superiors, ministers, and persons.

By our authority, we also commission you in the same way to apply and appropriate to that Congregation thus erected and instituted, as its endowment, all the goods, singularly and collectively, donated and assigned to it successively and at any time from now on, according as they will have been donated, bequeathed, and assigned. This will be done in such a way that it will be the right of its Superior General on his own authority, or of his deputy or deputies by themselves or by another or others, to take freely physical possession of all these goods in the name of this Congregation of the Mission; to retain in perpetuity those so acquired; to receive, exact, and levy taxes on the fruits and emoluments derived therefrom; and to convert them for the use and utility of the Congregation of the Mission.

If, in virtue of these present letters, you confirm, approve, erect, establish, apply, and appropriate, and do all the other things mentioned above, then we, by the aforesaid apostolic authority, according to these present letters, grant and approve in perpetuity for this Congregation of the Mission, its houses, Superior General, other Superiors and persons, and all its goods and affairs, that they may be able and empowered freely and lawfully to use, take advantage of, possess, and enjoy each and every one of the privileges, prerogatives, advantages, benefits, indults, indulgences, and favors, which any other similar or dissimilar Congregations, their houses, their Superiors General and other Superiors, ministers and persons, and their affairs, properties, and whatsoever of their goods use, take advantage of, possess, and enjoy, and are able and will be able to use, take advantage of, possess, and enjoy them in an equal degree and in the same manner and with no difference whatsoever, provided, nonetheless, that these be in use, not revoked or included in some revocation, and are not in opposition to the sacred Canons, the decrees of the Council of Trent, other apostolic Constitutions, or the particular Statutes of the Congregation of the Mission, just as if they had been granted specifically and particularly to them.

In like manner, we also impart in perpetuity to the said Vincent, and to the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission in

office at the time, the permission and faculty to be able and empowered to issue and establish any Statutes and Ordinances concerning the successful rule, government, direction, and organization of the Congregation of the Mission and of its houses, persons, and goods, as often as it seems expedient to them, provided however that these are lawful and morally good and in no way contrary to the sacred Canons, apostolic Constitutions, decrees, and institute of the Council of Trent, or any Rule of this kind of the aforementioned Congregation of the Mission, and are approved by the Archbishop of Paris, as well as to revoke, alter, change, and modify them and establish anew, with, however, similar preliminary examination and approval.

We decree that these present letters are, and shall be, valid, always and forever, and not included in any revocations, suspensions, limitations, or other contrary dispositions of similar or dissimilar favors, but rather always exempted from them.

We decree that as often as they are published, they shall be restored, unchanged, and preserved in their original and valid condition, and granted anew, even on any subsequent date chosen at any time by a Superior General currently in office and the members and persons of the Congregation of the Mission.

We decree that they must be judged and defined in this way by all judges, Ordinaries, and delegates whomsoever, enjoying whatsoever authority, and that whatever is attempted otherwise concerning them, by whatever authority, will be invalid, notwithstanding special or general apostolic Constitutions or Ordinances, or laws enacted or to be enacted in provincial, synodal, or universal councils, or anything else to the contrary.

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on the eve of the Ides of January, in the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord 1632, the tenth year of our pontificate.

84b. - CONTRACT FOR A PLACE AT THE SAINT-LAURENT FAIR

(Monday, May 23, 1633)

To all who will read these present letters, Brother Adrien Le Bon, former Prior of the priory and convent of Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris,¹ and Maître Vincent de Paul, priest and Superior of the venerable priests of the Congregation of the Mission established at present at Saint-Lazare, *seigneurs* of the Saint-Laurent fair held each year in the faubourg Saint-Martin of this city of Paris and its environs on the day and feast of Saint Lawrence² and other days following, send greetings.

We make it known that, by reason of the domanial rights and income that belong to us from the Saint-Laurent fair, we have permitted and by these present letters do permit Charles Constant, glass merchant, to take and occupy a place at this Saint-Laurent fair, in the faubourg Saint-Martin, on the side of and below Saint-Laurent Church, and that place will be two *toises*³ in length, with the width according to the alignment that will be given to him by our surveyor, in conformity with these present letters. He will occupy the place on the side of Saint-Laurent Church, past the house of Nicolas Sibert [or Libert], and this place is to be enjoyed by Constant only during his lifetime. The heirs of Constant shall claim no right to the place after the death of Constant, and Constant shall be obliged to register at the Saint-Lazare fair every year⁴ on the feast of Saint Mary Magdalen⁵ or another day close to the Saint-Laurent fair, and pay annually two

Document 84b. - *Annales C. M.* (1939), pp. 414-15. Joseph Catteau, C.M., made a copy of this 1633 deed, written on parchment and signed by the Prior of Saint-Lazare and Saint Vincent, which he had discovered in Châtillon-sur-Seine. For the notes on this document, we are indebted to Bernard Koch, C.M.

¹ Saint-Lazare Priory, as a *seigneurie*, had rights over the St-Laurent Fair, which was held just opposite the priory, on the other side of the rue du Faubourg-Saint-Denis. The former Prior, Adrien Le Bon, predecessor of M. Vincent, instructed him regarding his rights and obligations concerning this fair. In the beginning, certain documents were drawn up in the name of both these men and bear both signatures, as is the case with this one.

² August 10.

³ A unit of measure equal to about 6½ feet.

⁴ This registration was required to prove that the person in question was not dead and that his heirs had not violated the contract.

⁵ July 22.

sous six deniers rent for each *toise*, not including in this the fee for our surveyor. Constant may not sell or dispose of any portion of this place without our agreement, will, and consent, and, in the event that Constant should discontinue payment of this rent for three consecutive years, we will and intend that the place be returned to the estate of the Saint-Lazare Priory to do with and dispose of it as we choose, safeguarding in all else our right and that of others.⁶

In witness whereof we have signed these present letters and have had the seal of Saint-Lazare Priory affixed to them.

Drawn up and given at Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris on May 23, 1633.⁷

LEBON VINCENT DEPAUL

84c. - PETITION FOR INDULGENCES¹

(March 19, 1635)

Cardinal Ginetti,² on behalf of the Priests of the Mission of France, requests the faculty to grant a plenary indulgence to those who have made a general confession to these Fathers, and the faculty to establish the Forty Hours devotion, with its customary indulgences, in those places where this would seem appropriate. The

⁶Since 1262 the word *autrui* [others] had been used in Acts to mean "the good of the neighbor."

⁷Written in the margin, at the beginning, with no date: *Constant handed this place over in favor of Filipes Quinibert. Four livres.*

Document 84c. - Congregation of Propaganda Fide, *Acta*, vol. 10 (1634-35), Congregation n. 202 (March 19, 1635), affair n. 30, fol. 214v, written in Latin; printed in *Vincentiana* (1973), 1-2, pp. 105-06.

¹On July 25, 1634, Saint Vincent had written to François du Coudray in Rome asking him to apply to the Holy See for a plenary indulgence for those making a mission: "... In the name of God, Monsieur, do all you can to obtain the indulgences which His Holiness has granted the Jesuits and the Oratorians when they give a mission in rural areas ..." (cf. vol. I, p. 246). Du Coudray was recalled to France shortly before May 1, 1635. The sources that are available cannot prove that the petition was ever actually presented, but perhaps the present document from the *Acta* states the action taken on that request.

²Marzio Ginetti (1585-1671) was appointed Cardinal on January 19, 1626, then Legate in Ferrara, Legate *a latere* in Germany, Bishop of Albano, Sabina, and Porto. He was also Cardinal-Vicar and, when he died at eighty-six years of age on March 1, 1671, he was Subdean of the Sacred College of Cardinals.

Sacred Congregation directed the request for the indulgence to the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences. The Fathers were inclined to grant the requested faculty for only a period of three years, and that of the Forty Hours devotion was to be limited to two occasions annually.³

**85. - REGULATIONS FOR PRIESTS OF THE MISSION
SENT AS ARMY CHAPLAINS**

(1636)

The Priests of the Mission who are with the army will reflect that Our Lord has called them to this holy work: (1) to offer their prayers and sacrifices to God for the success of the King's good plans and for the preservation of his army; (2) to help soldiers who are in sin to withdraw from it, and those who are in the state of grace to remain in it; and, lastly, to do their utmost so that those who are going to die will leave this world in a state of salvation.

For this purpose they will have special devotion to the name God takes in Scripture, that of God of Armies,¹ and to the sentiments Our Lord had when He said *I came not to send peace, but the sword*;² and this is in order to give us peace, which is the goal of war.

They will reflect that, even if they are unable to rid the army of all its sins, God will grant them the grace of decreasing the number of them, which is as much as saying that, if Our Lord was to be crucified a hundred times more, perhaps He would be so only ninety times; and, if a thousand souls were to be damned because of their bad dispositions, they will act in such a way that, with the assistance of God's mercy and grace, some of that number might not be damned.

³We have no documents concerning the reply to this petition.

Document 85. - Abelly, *op. cit.*, bk. I, chap. XXXIII, pp. 154ff.

¹Cf. 1Sm 17:45. (NAB)

²Cf. Mt 10:34. (D-RB)

To do this, they have great need of the virtues of charity, fervor, mortification, obedience, patience, and modesty. That is why they will practice them constantly, both interiorly and exteriorly, especially in carrying out the Will of God.

They will celebrate Holy Mass daily or receive Holy Communion for this purpose.

They will honor the silence of Our Lord at the customary times, and always with regard to affairs of state; they will tell their troubles only to their Superior or to the person he designates.

If they are assigned to hear the confessions of the plague-stricken, they will do so from a distance, taking the necessary precautions; they will leave the bodily assistance of these and of the other sick men to the persons Providence uses in those duties.

They will often hold conferences, after reflecting before God on the subjects proposed; for example:

- (1) How important it is for priests to assist the armies;
- (2) In what this assistance consists;
- (3) The means to do it well.

They can use this same method to treat other topics that will be appropriate for them in this ministry, such as assistance to the sick, how to act during the fighting and battles, humility, patience, modesty, and other practices required with the armies.

They will observe as exactly as possible the little regulations of the Mission, especially with regard to times of rising and retirement, prayer, Divine Office, spiritual reading, and the examinations of conscience.

The Superior will assign each one his duties, giving to one the sacristy; to another, that of hearing the confessions of the members of the Company and reading at table; to another, the sick; to another, financial matters and the preparation of meals; to another, seeing that the tent and furnishings are loaded, unloaded, and set up in their place. Others will be given preaching and confessions, as the Superior thinks it advisable.

They will be billeted and live together, if possible, although they may be parceled out to the regiments. If they are assigned to different places, such as the vanguard or the rear guard, or in the body of

the army, the Superior who makes the assignments will see that they sleep in the tents, if possible.

85a. - ALAIN DE SOLMINIHAC AND THE CAHORS SEMINARY

(April 22, 1638)

At the Synodal Assembly held in the episcopal palace of the town of Cahors on April 22, 1638, presided the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Bishop Alain de Solminihac, Baron and Comte de Cahors, assisted by his Vicar-General, the members of his Chapter and of the one in Le Vigan, and the Archpriests, Priors, and Rectors of his diocese. The *Procureur Fiscal* of the Bishop, pointing out to the Assembly the need for a seminary in the present town of Cahors,¹ and that the Council of Trent expressly commands this, requested His Excellency to give orders that the chapter of the Council of Trent concerning the erection of seminaries be read so that, after hearing and acknowledging its importance, the Assembly might more easily deliberate on the opening of the seminary in the town, called for by the *Procureur Fiscal*.

The order was given by His Excellency, and the reading of the chapter from the Council was done, after which the Assembly deliberated on the above and unanimously agreed to the opening of the seminary in this town of Cahors. Whereupon His Excellency, in line with the terms of the Council, appointed for it some priests of the town, namely: from his cathedral Chapter, Maître Antoine-Claude Hebrard de Saint-Suplice [*sic*] his Archdeacon, some priests from the town, and M. Barthélemy Daurat, Rector of Soubroux. Next, the Assembly also unanimously named Maître Antoine Bouzon, Archpriest of Cahors and *Procureur Fiscal* of the

Document 85a. - Arch. Nat., 5^e 6703, signed document on parchment; printed in *Annales C. M.* (1939), p. 415.

¹As indicated here, within a year of taking over the Cahors diocese on October 17, 1637, Alain de Solminihac held a presynodal assembly, at which, among other things, he manifested his strong desire for a seminary in Cahors.

Bishop, to help the others named above to find the necessary means for opening the seminary, in conformity with the Council of Trent.

ALAIN OF CAHORS

By order of His Excellency

J. GARAT,² *Secretary*

85b. - PETITION FOR INDULGENCES¹

(1640)

Most Holy Father,

The Priests of the Mission, approved by you, the very devoted petitioners of Y[our] H[oliness], most humbly make known that they find great difficulty in the missions they often give in various parts of Christendom, because of the lack of devotion of some ignorant Christians concerning certain reserved sins and vows that have been taken lightly. To overcome such difficulties, they humbly petition Y[our] H[oliness] to grant a plenary indulgence to all the faithful who make a general confession, if necessary—or at least a personal one—during the mission, receive Holy Communion, and pray for the exaltation of the Holy Church, the preservation of o[ur] L[ord],² the eradication of heresy, and peace among Christian princes; to those who listen devoutly to the instructions and exhortations they are usually given in those missions, an indulgence of ten years every time; to the Superiors of those missions, the faculty to absolve from all sins, no matter how serious they may be, including those reserved in the Bull *In coena Domini*; and to commute vows, with the exception of chastity, religion, and the pilgrimage to

²A monk of Chancelade and Vicar-General of the Cahors diocese.

Document 85b. - Archives of Propaganda Fide, SOCG 401, fol. 590-91, unsigned original written in Italian; printed in *Vincentiana* (1973), 1-2, pp. 106-07.

¹On October 12, 1639, Saint Vincent directed Louis Lebreton to present to the Holy See a petition for indulgences and to inform him of the results (cf. vol. 1, p. 585).

²The Supreme Pontiff.

Jerusalem and Saint James. And the petitioners will pray for the felicitous preservation of Y[our] H[oliness].

Quam Deus, etc.

85c. - NEW PETITION FOR INDULGENCES

(Before February 3, 1640)

Most Holy Father,

M. Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, most devoutly and humbly petitions Y[our] H[oliness] that, in order to overcome the difficulties frequently encountered in the missions, in which [the Missionaries] carry out their work at their own expense in different parts of the world, Y[our] H[oliness] might deign to grant them the restored privileges for France,¹ which would afterward be approved for that Congregation on the recommendation of reputable theologians and especially by the [Most] Illustrious and [Most] Reverend Nuncio to France, and that these faculties be granted for a period determined by Your Holiness as circumstances may demand.²

Document 85c. - Archives of Propaganda Fide, *SOCG*, 401, fol. 587, unsigned original, written in Latin; printed in *Vincentiana* (1973), 1-2, pp. 107-12.

¹Saint Vincent was requesting privileges to be granted to the Congregation of the Mission, not to a particular person. Moreover, no specified faculty was requested, just "*privilegia reformatata pro Gallia*."

²This petition was discussed by the Sacred Congregation on February 3, 1640 (cf. Congregation of Propaganda Fide, *Acta*, vol. 14 [1640-41], fol. 17; printed in *Vincentiana* [1973], p. 112). Cardinal Spada raised the point that it was not customary to grant faculties for an indefinite period of time to Superiors of Orders or Congregations; they were granted only to a specified person, and only after an investigation of his knowledge and probity. It was decided to ask the Nuncio to France, Bishop Renuccio Scotti, to send a report on the state and usefulness of the Congregation of the Mission and to give his opinion regarding the petition (cf. *Lettere volgari della S. C. de Propaganda Fide*, vol. 20 [1640-41], fol. 9; printed in *Vincentiana* [1973], p. 113). This letter of February 11, 1640, gives some indication that the Sacred Congregation might have been disposed to granting the request.

Scotti's response is undocumented; nevertheless, Saint Vincent renewed his request in February 1656 (cf. vol. V, pp. 548-49), in which he specified the faculties desired and the limitations placed on their use. In March of that year he received a papal brief granting the requested faculties for seven years, of which he notified the Superiors (cf. vol. V, pp. 571-72).

And may God preserve Y[our] H[oliness] happily for many years.

**85d. - REPLIES TO ROBERT LACHAU ON THE INSTRUCTION
OF ORDINANDS**

(June 4, 1640)

M. Vincent is asked to send in writing the order observed in their house for the instructions of clerics who are to be promoted to Holy Orders:

(1) By whose authority they are sent to that house.

(2) If it [the instruction] takes place before or after the examination of those clerics by the Archdiocesan officials to ascertain the aptitudes of each one who presents himself for Orders.

(3) If this instruction is given before or after the promotion of those who are admitted to Holy Orders.

(4) How many days they stay at their house to receive this instruction.

(5) On what points they are mainly instructed, and what order is observed in this.

(6) If each one is given afterward some proof in writing of the instruction they received during their stay in that house.

Replies to the points listed above:

(1) As to the first point, it is the Archbishop of Paris who sends the ordinands to the Mission.

(2) The ordinands are examined by the Officialis of the Archbishop before being sent to the Mission.

(3) Admission to the Mission and the instruction take place before the reception of Holy Orders.

(4) The ordinands spend eleven days at the Mission.

Document 85d. - Bibl. Sainte-Geneviève, Ms. 3238, fols. 283-84; printed in *Vincentiana* (1968), pp. 58-59.

On June 4, 1640, in order to clarify various aspects of the work for the ordinands, which the Jesuits were conducting at the Collège de Montferrand in Clermont-Ferrand, the Rector, Robert Lachau, S.J., posed a series of questions to Saint Vincent. The Saint answered his terse questions in a similar fashion.

(5) In the morning they are taught practical theology, which they are made to practice afterward, as with children in catechism class; in the afternoon, the presentation on the Pontifical is given. Throughout the day, in addition to the practice sessions, they are taught the ceremonies. Immediately after rising, mental prayer is made together, and they share the thoughts they had during that time.

(6) The ordinands are not given any written proof that they have participated in the exercises.

**86. - AUTHORIZATION FOR LOUIS LEBRETON¹
TO OPEN A HOUSE IN ROME**

(July 11, 1641)

Giovanni Battista Altieri,² Bishop of Camerino and Assistant to the Most Eminent and Most Reverend Vicar-General and Judge-in-Ordinary in Rome and its district:

A petition was presented to our Most Holy Father Pope Urban VIII on behalf of Vincent de Paul, Superior General of a Congregation called of the Mission, duly established in Paris by papal authority in 1632 and composed of priests and coadjutor Brothers, whose principal end is to seek their own perfection while attending to the spiritual and temporal welfare of the country people and to be of service to the clergy, that the Pope might deign to allow this Congregation to function in the city of Rome and its district. Our Holy Father entrusted me and the Most Reverend Fathers Falconieri, Paulati, and Ingoli³ with the task of examining the matter with due diligence. With the vote and assent of the aforementioned Fathers,

Document 86. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, register entitled *Fondations de séminaires*, fol. 100, written in Latin.

¹Louis Lebreton (cf. II, 17, n. 1).

²Giovanni Battista Altieri (cf. V, 1, n. 2).

³Lelio Falconieri, Paulati, and Ingoli. For certain activities within France it was necessary for Saint Vincent to deal with Propaganda Fide, of which Bishop Ingoli was the Secretary (1622-49).

and after due deliberation, having examined the Bull of Erection of the Institute and with full knowledge of the beneficial results of the missions of Father Louis Lebreton, one of the priests of the Congregation, carried on by our authority in the dwellings and huts of the shepherds in this district, we have therefore decreed, after consultation with the Holy Father and by his order and command, that this Congregation be allowed to function in this city; and we do, in fact, permit it to carry out its legitimate functions. We authorize Louis Lebreton to build or rent a house for himself and the members of his Congregation and to work there, freely and lawfully, for the salvation of the clergy and the country people in the city and its district, in accordance with its Institute. All this is to be done in such a way, however, that they remain immediately subject to the Most Eminent Vicar, to us, and to our successors in what concerns work for the neighbor, while remaining obedient in all else to their own Superior General, in accord with the Bull of erection. In consequence of the above, they are granted all the favors and privileges which similar Institutes in this venerable city are accustomed to enjoy, neither may they be harassed nor disturbed for any reason by anyone whomsoever in their enjoyment of these privileges, under penalties to be imposed by us.

In testimony of the above, etc.

Given in Rome from our office, on July 11, 1641, in the eighteenth year of the pontificate of our Most Holy Father Urban VIII, Pope by the Providence of God.

GIOVANNI-BATTISTA,
Bishop of Camerino, Assistant

FRANCESCO GRAMBERTI,
Secretary

**87. - APPROVAL BY THE ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS OF VOWS TAKEN
IN THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION**

(October 19, 1641)

Jean-François de Gondi, by the grace of God and the Holy Apostolic See Archbishop of Paris, to our beloved Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of Priests of the Mission, approved by us many years ago, greetings in the Lord.

A petition on your behalf has been presented to us, containing the following: that our Holy Father Pope Urban VIII, by means of the Bull of Erection of the Congregation of the Mission promulgated by our Officialis, was pleased to grant to you and the Superior General the permission and faculty, in perpetuity, of formulating and issuing, when circumstances seem to you or your successors to warrant it, whatever Statutes and Ordinances are suitable for the successful direction and government of the Congregation, its houses, personnel, and property, provided these be legitimate and upright, in no way contrary to the Sacred Canons and Apostolic Constitutions, decrees of the Council of Trent, or the Rules and the Institute of the Congregation of the Mission, and are subject to approval by us and our successors; since experience has caused you to fear that, if the priests of the Congregation remain free to withdraw from it, they may wish to do so at will, yielding to the first future temptation against their vocation, or even as long as they remain in a state of doubt as to their future perseverance—although God in His mercy has granted to many the blessing of perseverance and of keeping its Rules—they may neglect to seek the perfection required for their Institute; furthermore, when you consider that this same God, in the Old Testament, willed to oblige His chosen people by the bond of circumcision to observe His law in perpetuity; that, in the New Law, holy Baptism binds us to serve Our Lord Jesus Christ throughout our lives; that the Church entrusts the spiritual care of its members exclusively to those binding themselves to remain all their lives in the priestly state by the reception of Holy Orders; that

this same Church commits married couples to one another only by means of a sacrament, with a lifelong obligation; in addition, that all Communities and Congregations, with few exceptions, have always believed it necessary that all their members should be obliged by some vows—originally simple vows and, from the time of Boniface VIII,¹ solemn vows—to ensure perseverance in their vocation and in the observance of their Rules; because of all this, after weighing diligently all the above difficulties, reasons, and examples, you have judged necessary, in order to ensure that the members might remain steadfast in the Congregation and in the due observance of the Rule, to ordain that all those who enter the Congregation from now on, after completing a year of probation in the seminary, will make Good Purposes to spend their entire lives in the Congregation, observing Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience. They make these Good Purposes before the Superior, and, upon completion of the second year in the seminary, they take simple vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience.

They also take a vow of Stability, that is, they commit themselves in the above Congregation, for the rest of their lives, to the salvation of the poor country people, in accordance with its Rules and Constitutions. This is a simple vow, from which they may be dispensed only by the Supreme Pontiff, by you, or by a future Superior General. It is taken during the solemnity of the Mass, celebrated by the Superior, who hears it but does not receive it. Those who are already members of the Congregation and who wish to commit themselves in it by these vows can and may be admitted to them by you and by your successors, but in such a manner that the Congregation must never be considered one of the Religious Orders by virtue of taking these vows, nor cease to be part of the body of the clergy.

Lastly, seeing that, in the petition made on your behalf, we were requested to approve and confirm your decisions concerning the above matters, and after carefully considering the reasons advanced, we have been favorably disposed and anxious to concur

¹Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303).

with your petition, and find your proposal as outlined above in no way contrary to the Sacred Canons, Apostolic Constitutions, Decrees of the Council of Trent, or the Rules and the Institute of your Congregation. In fact, we agreed that they are very helpful in preserving your members in the Congregation and in the observance of its Rules. In addition, since it might be hoped that, with God's grace, we would be doing a work pleasing to God and fruitful for the Church, by this document we have approved and confirmed, and do confirm and approve, your proposal, in accordance with what has been laid down above.

In witness and testimony to each item, we have ordered the present letters to be drawn up and signed by the Secretary of the Archdiocese of Paris, and the seal of our office to be affixed to them.

Given in Paris on October 19 in the year of Our Lord 1641.

BAUDOUYN

87a. - FOUNDATION CONTRACT FOR THE HOUSE IN LUÇON

(December 7, 1641)

Be it known to all that, at the Court of the Royal Seal for contracts at Fontenay-le-Comte, were present and personally recognized in their own right, on the one hand Nicolas Pichard, sieur de la Frainerie, *Receveur* of the *taillon*¹ in the jurisdiction of the town of Fontenay, and Dame Marguerite Dejan his wife, duly authorized by

Document 87a. - *Annales C. M.* (1938), pp. 611-14. This document and annotation were taken from Benjamin Fillon, *Une fondation de Saint Vincent de Paul à Luçon* (Fontenay: Imprimerie de Robuchon, 1848). This copy differs here and there from the parchment found in Arch. Nat., S 6706.

The contracts for a number of other houses have also been published in this volume: Marseilles (Doc. 90), Sedan (Doc. 92), Saint-Méen (Doc. 117), and Montpellier (Doc. 118). Copies of foundation contracts conserved in the Archives of the Congregation of the Mission, Paris, too numerous to publish in this volume, include those of Agen, Annecy, Cahors, Crécy, Le Mans, Montauban, Notre-Dame de la Rose/Aiguillon, Richelieu, Saint-Méen, and Saintes. For further study see José María Román, "The Foundations of Saint Vincent de Paul," in *Vincentian Heritage*, (1988), vol. IX, no. 2, pp. 134-60.

¹The *Receveur* was a royal tax collector; the *taillon* was one of the royal taxes.

him for implementation of the contents of these letters, both residing in this town; and, on the other hand, Squire Jacques de Sallo, sieur de Beauregard, in the name of and as attorney for Messire Vincent Depaul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Reverend Fathers of the Mission, and by the order and command Messire Vincent Depaul has from the Most Eminent Cardinal Duc de Richelieu.

Pichard and Dejan jointly, willingly, and voluntarily, separately and one for the other, renouncing the benefices of division, order, and enquiry into assets declared hereinafter, sold, handed over, and transferred, and by these present letters do sell, hand over, and transfer in perpetuity to M. de Sallo in the name of the attorney of Messire Vincent Depaul, Superior of the Congregation of the Mission, stipulating and accepting for him in the future, and for interested parties entitled to it from him, in virtue of a letter missive dated Paris, October 12, and another of last November 24, both signed Vincent Depaul:

Namely, a house commonly called Pontdevie,² situated in the town of Luçon and consisting of a main building, cellars, store-rooms, and a large courtyard at one end of which are stables, with a lodge in a corner of the other end. The garden behind this building is where the Reverend Fathers of the Mission are now living. Besides the wine press adjoining the building and small garden, there is at the end a plot farmed by a certain La Tousche, with entries and exits. All of these are surrounded by walls and are dependencies of the Pontdevie house, connected on one side; and from one end of the side, from the main doors of the house to the road coming from the main gates to the almonry of Luçon; from the other side to the garden of Jean Cotterau, sieur de Grandmarais, and on the other to the gardens and stables of Jean Naulot, Marie Merland, the sieur de la Mongie, and others. They also sold him, in the said name, a little garden in front of the main door of the Pontdevie house. The street between the two meets the street in the front and, on the other sides, the garden of the Debonds chapel, of which Laurent Rochereau is

²Pontdevie was the former townhouse of the *seigneurs* of Pont-de-Vie, a parish in Le Poiré sous la Roche-sur-Yon, in the Vendée. This *seigneurie* was in the Bishop's jurisdiction. Étienne de Pont-de-Vie was a monk of the Luçon monastery in 1422.

the present chaplain. The sellers have declared that they believe these houses and gardens belong to the fiefs of the archdeaconry of Aizenay³ and Les Baronies of Luçon⁴ and do not know to what obligations the premises sold above are subject, proposing to declare this when it comes to their knowledge, after the sale, transfer, and transport, for, and on condition of, the price and sum of 4,850 livres *tournois*, which M. de Sallo gave and paid the sellers in cash, before our undersigned notaries and royal lawyers, 58 sous, *quart d'écus*, and other coins in the required weight and quality, constituting the said sum, which they obtained, took, and received. They were satisfied and are satisfied with this, and released and do release M. de Sallo from this in the said name.

This sum of 4,850 livres is from the money of Messire Vincent Depaul, a donation given him by my Lord the Most Eminent Cardinal Duc de Richelieu for the purchase of the above-mentioned premises sold by Pichard and his wife. To the said authority, each separately and one for all, as has been said, they resigned, divested themselves, and relinquished, and have vested and referred to M. de Sallo in the said name, willing and consenting that the possession and use they have made of it should be for and in the said name.

The sellers, handing over and transferring to him by the privilege granted by the present letters all rights of property and possession, to be effected beginning now and in perpetuity, promise to guarantee and safeguard him from all troubles, dispossession, and other hindrances, paying in the future the customary debts that may be owed and have to be paid, on condition, however, that all the furnishings in the Pontdevie house belonging to Pichard and his wife remain there until next April 1, at which time they will be obliged to remove them. In addition, they will also be able to take the two receptacles and barrels in the vineyard, provided Pichard and his wife have paid the Reverend Fathers of the Mission the rent they owe them for the house since the month of August until now and are no longer in their debt.

³The Archdeaconry of Aizenay had a feudal benefice in Luçon from as far back as the eleventh century.

⁴Pierre de Nivelle was Bishop of Luçon at the time.

And the sellers have expressly reserved for themselves and retained in their possession all other goods, taxes, land, and possessions belonging to them in the Luçon parish and its surroundings, apart from the aforementioned things sold there.

All this has been respectively willed, stipulated, and accepted accordingly by the parties, and for this purpose each will have, keep, and carry out whatever applies to his affair and promise—they have obliged and mortgaged each and every one of their goods each separately and one for all, as is said, renouncing the benefice of division, enquiry into assets, and order, of which they have said they are well aware and are such that several obliged together, having renounced the benefice, are bound one for the other, etc., constrained for everything, without enquiry into the assets of the other joint-debtors.

For this and for everything above, the parties, by their consent, will, and request, were judged and ordered by the decision and order of the Court by us, Étienne Robert and Pierre Bonnet, notaries and royal tax collectors, to whose power and jurisdiction they submitted themselves and their possessions.

Drawn up and signed in Fontenay in the house of Pichard on the afternoon of December 7, 1641.

Stamped with the seal under the priv[ileges] of the edict.

The draft is signed by: N. Pichard, Marguerite de Jan, Jacques de Salle, and by us, the undersigned notaries:

ROBERT, *notary and royal tax collector*
J. BONNET, *notary and royal tax collector*

Review of the draft and the present letters by my fellow notary, 15 livres 12 sous.

Examined in the office of Fontenay-le-Comte, December 8, 1641, by me, Fléau, clerk. Received 13 sous 4 deniers.

I, the undersigned Louis Couillaud, tax farmer of the archdeaconry of Aizenay and *seigneurie* de Saint-Jaume for the fief in which is situated the mansion of Pontdevie, its appurtenances and dependencies of courtyard, lodge, house, stables, garden, and a vineyard with a small garden at the end of which is a common

boundary, all joined together; also the tax farmer of Les Baronnies of Luçon for one half, with Gilles and Baptiste Cicotteaux, my associates, in whom I have confidence, for the other half. Belonging to the fief of Les Baronnies is the little garden located in front of the main door of the Pontdevie house, forming the path between the two. I acknowledge and declare having received from the designated purchaser in the present contract the sum of 150 livres *tournois* for all the *lods et ventes*⁵ of the entire contents of the contract and the surplus I remitted as compensation to the purchaser. I am satisfied with the sum of 150 livres *t[ournoi]s* for all the said taxes, and I release and promise to regard the purchaser no longer in the debt of my associates, the aforementioned Cicotteaux, by the present receipt, which I have written and signed in Fontenay-le-Comte, December 8, 1641.

L. COULLAUD

88. - ROYAL APPROVAL OF THE BULL *SALVATORIS NOSTRI*

(May 16, 1642)

Louis, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, to our beloved and faithful Councillors holding our Court at the Parlement of Paris, to the Provost of that place or his Lieutenant, to all our other lawyers and Lieutenants, and to each person dealing with this request as it will pertain to him, greetings.

Our dearly beloved Priests of the Congregation of the Mission have informed and pointed out to us that, having obtained from our Holy Father the Pope the attached Bulls, under the counterseal of our chancellery, bearing the approval for their Institute, they desire to have the Bulls implemented, should it please us to grant them our

⁵Important seigneurial dues charged at the time of the transfer of tenures, either by inheritance or by sale.

Document 88. - Arch. Nat., legislative and judiciary section, X^{1a} 8654, fol. 383v.

letters necessary for such action, and they humbly make this request.

For these reasons, giving special consideration to all that concerns the Congregation because of the great successes it continues daily to achieve for the glory of God and the relief and salvation of our poor subjects in the rural areas, we have permitted and approved, and do now permit and approve by these letters; we will, and it pleases us, that the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission be able and entitled to have the Bulls implemented and to carry them out fully, point for point, in accord with their formulation and content.

We inform you today that, by our present letters of permission, authorization, and concession, you may cause, authorize, and allow the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, present and to come, to implement them fully and peacefully, putting a stop to all troubles and impediments to the contrary, provided there be nothing in them contrary to our rights and the concordats between the Holy See and us, and the privileges and liberties of the Gallican Church. For such is our pleasure. We grant you power and special authorization to carry this out.

Given in Paris on May 16, the year of grace 1642, and the thirty-second of our reign.

By mandate of the King in his Council.

SAULGER¹

89. - MINUTES OF THE ASSEMBLY AT SAINT-LAZARE

(October 1642)

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
the All-holy and Adorable Trinity.

Today, October 13, 1642.

¹Nicolas Saulger.

Document 89. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Register of Assemblies, seventeenth-century copy.

We, Vincent de Paul, most unworthy Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, in the presence of Messieurs Antoine Portail, François du Coudray, Jean Bécu, Antoine Lucas, Jean Dehorgny, Lambert aux Couteaux, Léonard Boucher, Pierre du Chesne,¹ René Alméras, and Jean Bourdet,² all priests of our Congregation, assembled in the hall where we are accustomed to meet, explained to those priests that, since God was pleased to institute this poor Little Company about sixteen years ago, and since He in His goodness has granted us the grace to introduce gradually the practices observed in it, we no longer have to introduce anything into it except the custom of Congregations or General Assemblies, which are common practice in the holy Communities of the Church of God, following the example of its Councils and synods.

I added that I thought Our Lord was asking the same of us, although the number of persons and houses of our Company was very small, and for that purpose I had convoked Messieurs Dehorgny, Superior of our Collège des Bons-Enfants; Jean Bécu, Superior of our house in Toul; Lambert aux Couteaux, Superior of our Richelieu house; Jean Bourdet, Superior of our house in Troyes; and Pierre du Chesne, Superior of our Crécy house in the Meaux diocese. Since I was unable to convoke the Superiors of our houses of Notre-Dame de la Rose in the Agen diocese; of Luçon, of Annecy in the Geneva diocese; and of our house in Saintes—either because of the distance or because they have been established there only a short time, or because, since some Superiors have been sent to these houses just recently, there are certain disadvantages in taking them so soon from their houses—we designated as their replacements Messieurs Portail, du Coudray, Lucas, Boucher, and Alméras.

We explained to them the reasons why we have to hold General Assemblies from time to time, reasons based on: (1) the purpose for which they are held, namely, the election of the General, some matter of major and continued importance, or something that concerns the preservation of the Congregation; (2) the custom of the Church

¹Pierre du Chesne (cf. VIII, 114, n. 3).

²Jean Bourdet (cf. III, 12, n. 6).

at the Councils and synods begun by the Apostles, and the custom in Communities.

We told them in what the assemblies consist; that in General Assemblies there are six things to consider: (1) the purpose for which an assembly must be convoked; (2) who should be present at it and have a deliberative vote at present; (3) and who should have one in the future; (4) the place; (5) the time; (6) the manner.

As to the purpose, I told them that it was: (1) to elect the Superior General or to treat matters of major and continuing importance, etc.; (2) that the first must be conducted by the Vicar-General who will have been named before the death of the deceased General to govern the Company until the election of another General; and that the second must be conducted by the General; (3) that, at present, only the local Superiors should be allowed to take part in the meeting. And, if it should please God that the Company later be divided into provinces, then only the Provincials will participate in the General Assembly, along with two delegates from each province; (4) that the time of holding the General Assembly for the election of the General will be three months after the death of the deceased General; (5) that the place will be the one the Vicar-General will judge most convenient; as to the manner of electing the General, that will be done separately, in writing; (6) that the discussion of business will be handled as follows: when the day arrives and the Superiors have gathered together, the Mass of the Holy Spirit will be celebrated for this purpose, and the *Veni Sancte Spiritus* or the *Veni Creator Spiritus* will be said before opening the first session. Then, the Superior General—or, if he is ill, the person he appoints as his Vicar-General—will begin the work by stating: (1) the purpose for which he has convoked the Company; (2) his reasons for doing so; (3) the means to be taken to know God's Will regarding the topic proposed, exhorting the Company to practice those means. He will then have someone present the proposed topics, which have been put down in writing, in the assembly hall, where each one can read them.

In the second session, he will begin to hear the opinions, giving everyone the opportunity to discuss the topic proposed and continuing the sessions until everyone has given his opinion. If all are in

agreement, he will, in that case, have the decision written in the book intended for this purpose and have it read aloud to the Assembly. In case there is a difference of opinion, the Assembly will elect four persons, who will settle the question by a plurality of votes together with the Superior General, and the Company will be obliged to accept what they decide, as it will promise before the election of those four persons.

We told them furthermore that, to carry out this work successfully, they had to pray fervently and proceed with great humility; that no one should propose anything for the sake of debating it; that everything had to be proposed by the Superior General, and furthermore, that there should be no discussion with anyone whomsoever outside of the Assembly—not even with those who are members of it—regarding matters treated at the Assembly, nor about any other matter concerning the leadership of the Company, under any good pretext whatsoever.

Whereupon, when I had asked the opinion of each of the participants concerning what I had just proposed to them, all replied, one after the other, that they agreed with what I was proposing to them and accepted it.

When the Company met at four in the afternoon that same day, I told them that the first item to be discussed was the Rules of the Company. I said that I had three things to mention to them in this discussion:

(1) I mentioned the motives we have to give ourselves to God in order to consider, examine, and finalize the Rules the Assembly needed to attain its end. The first of these is taken from the purpose of these Rules, namely, to unite different mentalities and men of various nations; the second concerned the duration of the Rules, which should be for entire centuries.

(2) I showed them the draft of the Rules and made a presentation of them.

(3) I gave them some means for obtaining the grace of God in order to know His Will regarding the draft of the Rules, which were: [1] to consider them in the sight of God and in view of the purpose of the Company in order to see whether they are a means to attain it;

[2] to rid themselves of their attachments, inclinations, and personal aversions. And I distributed all the drafts to them so that each might read them and note what had to be corrected, added, shortened, or deleted entirely; after that, we would study the remarks. Everyone in the Assembly agreed to this.

The next day, the fourteenth of the said month and year, the Assembly met from seven to nine in the morning; the members worked in the same hall on reading the Rules, as they did from four to six on the afternoon of the same day.

The day after that, the fifteenth of the month, the Assembly continued the reading and comments on the Rules in the morning and afternoon at the same time as above.

The following day, the sixteenth of the month, the Assembly continued the reading and comments on the Rules, from seven to ten in the morning.

The same day, from four to six, they continued the same task.

The next day, the seventeenth of the month, the Assembly met at eight o'clock in the morning. It was suggested that, given the large number of comments made on the Rules—which would take a long time to put to a vote and would inconvenience many of the individual houses from which the Superiors were absent—it might be more advisable to entrust that to two or three members of the Assembly, who would decide everything together with the Superior General. When all replied that they agreed with this, the Assembly named M. Portail, M. Dehorgny, and Messieurs du Coudray and Lambert, for as long as they are at Saint-Lazare, and, if they leave, M. Alméras will be the substitute.

(2) [*sic*] The Assembly worked hard at studying and examining very closely the Rules of the Superior General, on which arose several questions that have not been resolved. And from four to six in the afternoon of the same day, after several questions were presented on the topic of the Rules of the Superior General, the Assembly agreed to abide by the terms of the Rule, especially concerning the authority the Superior General will have over the Company, except that it would be added that he should not borrow a large sum of

money unless it was for the good of the Company, and this after informing his Assistants.

The following day, the eighteenth of the month, from eight to ten in the morning, two questions were debated and decided: (1) whether, in the cases specified in the Rules of the Superior General, the Company could remove and dismiss the General, as is stated in the Rule. The reply from the Assembly was that this would unquestionably be the best thing and would be for the good of the Company and of the General himself; (2) whether it would be advisable, beginning now, to divide our houses into provinces. The decision was affirmative, with the change that, given the shortage of men in the places where the Company is now present, the Superior General should appoint a Visitor for more or less three years to look after the provinces, as he judged advisable; and because he can name either a Superior of one of the houses or someone else, and since our houses in Rome and Annecy are far away, they will send their opinions by letter, in the way that will be indicated to them.

The next day, the nineteenth of the month, at the opening of the meeting, M. Portail asked pardon of the Assembly because, by interrupting someone who was speaking, he felt he had failed in the submission and condescension the Assembly requires.

Then (1) the reading and finalization of the Rules of the Superior General was completed; (2) the chapter on the election of the Superior General was presented, and the following was decided:

[1] That as soon as the Superior General was elected, he would make a retreat. At the end of it, after having celebrated Holy Mass, in the presence of God he would write on two separate pieces of paper: on one, the person he judged suitable to serve as Vicar-General of the Company after his death until a Superior General was elected; and on the other, the names of two candidates he would propose to the Assembly, as the chapter on elections states. Then he would seal the two pieces of paper and lock them in a strongbox with two different locks, for which he would have one key and the First Assistant the other. In the event that the man he named as Vicar-General should die or be prevented by illness or something else from working constantly as his duty demands, the Assistant

oldest in vocation in the Company will be considered and recognized as Vicar-General and will take over the government of the entire Company. It was decided at the same time that all this would be included in the Rules for the Superior General; [2] immediately after the death of the General, the Vicar-General should endeavor to hold the General Assembly as soon as possible, due allowance being made for the extent of the Company. Nevertheless, the Vicar-General may not let more than five months pass, no matter how spread out the Company may be.

The following day, the twentieth of the month, the decisions taken in the preceding session were confirmed at the beginning of the meeting. At the same time, it was decided that, besides the exhortation which, according to the chapter on elections, the Vicar-General has to give at the opening of the General Assembly convoked to elect the Superior General, he should give another one—short and moving—on the day the Assembly holds the election. In it he will point out the importance of this action, which is a matter of reviewing the means of preserving or of ruining the work God has placed in the hands of the Company. He will take good care not to show any preference toward anyone whomsoever in the Company.

(2) [*sic*] It was also decided that the individual members of the Company would bind themselves by simple vows never to seek any position of responsibility or office of Superior in the Company, nor any benefice outside of it. For the latter, they should even vow not to consent to being named or to accept these positions, unless they are obliged to do so by someone who can oblige them under pain of sin. The vows would not be made at the end of the two years in the seminary, but a few years later, as the Superior General of the Company would judge suitable.

The next day, the twenty-first of the month, the Assembly completed what was left of the chapter on elections, and, after having settled a few other difficulties that remained, the Assembly concluded that the chapter on elections would continue in the form that was given to it, except for having a clean copy of it made by the Assembly delegates to work on the Rules and Constitutions.

On the morning of the following day, the twenty-second of the month, the chapter on Triennial Assemblies was proposed and read to the Assembly; both those held in the provinces, composed of the local Superiors, and those that are to be held in the place where the Superior General resides, composed of representatives from each province. It was decided with no opposition that the order stated in the chapter would be followed.

Next, the Assembly determined two things:

(1) Henceforth there would be a second probationary period, at Saint-Lazare or wherever else the Superior General would indicate; that it would take place only six or seven years after the seminary for an interval of one year, without, however, limiting the power of the Superior General, who can always either delay the six or seven years or shorten the year of probation, as he deems advisable for the good of the individual and the need of the Company.

(2) The Assembly agreed to divide the houses into provinces, beginning now, and did, in fact, divide them: Paris and Crécy into one; Toul and Champagne into another; Richelieu, Luçon, Saintes, and Notre-Dame de la Rose into another; Annecy and Rome into another.

At eight in the evening of the same day, the Assembly confirmed the chapter on Triennial Assemblies. It decided that, considering the small size of the provinces, for the present the Superior General can send a Visitor whom he judges suitable and dispose the members of each province to remain there or to be sent to the provinces and houses to which he thinks God is calling them, now and for always. It also decided that the authority to admit outsiders into our houses should be left to the General, provided he uses it rarely and for very weighty reasons.

At the end, M. Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation, after having represented to the Assembly how incapable he felt to lead it, earnestly begged the members, in all humility, on his knees, to elect another Superior General. The Assembly responded that it could not elect another Superior during the lifetime of the one whom God in His goodness had elected for them. After a few other entreaties, he accepted, declaring that this was the first act of obedi-

ence he thought he was rendering to the Assembly, and he begged the members to help him by their prayers. The Assembly not only promised to do this, but even to renew the profession of obedience they had made to him.

It was also decided by the Assembly that the Superior General will make an annual retreat, and, at that time—or when he thinks it expedient—after his general confession and the Holy Mass he will then celebrate, he will choose before God two persons from the Company whom he judges most suitable to succeed him in his office, when God will have taken him to Himself. He will write the names on a piece of paper that will be sealed, and will enclose it in a strongbox with two different keys; he will keep one of them and the First Assistant the other. The strongbox will be kept after his death by the oldest man in the house who is not an Assistant, along with the key the Superior General had. It will be opened only in the presence of the members of the Chapter assembled for the election of the Superior General. Immediately after the election of the Secretary and Assistant, who are elected in the Assembly, the strongbox will be opened, the paper unsealed by the new Secretary in the presence of the entire Assembly, and the names written on the paper read aloud and given to each member of the Assembly to be read and acknowledged. Afterward, the Chapter members will see which of the two they will choose, unless they think that someone else is more capable, whom they may take, other than those the Superior proposed. All this will be done by a plurality of votes, which will be collected by the Vicar-General, as is stated in the chapter on elections.

The following day, the twenty-third of the month, the Superior General gave a short, concise exhortation to the assembled Company, in which he pointed out: (1) the importance of making a good choice of two Assistants because they are the two guardian angels of the Superior General and the ones on whom the Company depends for all that concerns the Superior and the Company; (2) the qualities required in them, which are zeal, discretion, and wisdom; that they be well-read, and that all God's gifts should be apparent in them.

For the third point, he put forward whether or not a secretary and some Assistants should be appointed to hold this election. The Assembly decided that, for this first time, each would simply write on a piece of paper the name of the person for whom he is voting, and the Superior General, together with the two men who happen to be beside him, would read them out. This was then done in the sight of everyone. M. Portail was elected First Assistant and Admonitor³ of the Superior General, and M. Dehorgny Second Assistant. They then promised by oath to keep the Company informed concerning the conduct of the General, in the event that they may be obliged to do so.

It was further decided that, should the Superior General be obliged by the needs of the nascent Company to send out one or both of the Assistants for some important affair or to be the Superior in a distant place, he will inform the provinces of this, if he replaces them with others, so that, if the Visitors accept the choice he makes of the others, he will keep them on; if not, he will take those for whom the majority will vote in writing, and disregard the others.

Drawn up at Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris on October 23 of the above year 1642.

VINCENT DEPAUL	PORTAIL	DU COUDRAY
LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX	A. LUCAS	
JEAN BÉCU	JEAN DEHORGNY	BOUCHER
ALMÉRAS	BOURDET	DU CHESNE

³In the 1954 edition of the Constitutions and Rules of the Congregation of the Mission, revised in accord with the 1917 Code of Canon Law, no. 43 states: "The Admonitor of the Superior General shall be taken from the Assistants, and he is elected by the General Assembly by an absolute majority of the votes, just as in the election of the Assistants General." No. 44 stipulates: "His office is: 1) To remind the Superior General about matters which are of great moment and which affect the latter's person and office, and to do this with the greatest humility, charity and prudence; 2) To pray in a special manner for the Superior General, since he is held by reason of his office to keep watch over the soul of the General." The 1984 Constitutions and Statutes make no mention of this office.

89a. REPORT ON SAINT-YVES CHURCH IN ROME¹

[1643]

S[ain]t-Yves Church in Rome was formerly given by His Holiness to the nation of Brittany to maintain there six Breton priests, and possesses at present a revenue of about eight hundred écus.

Since Brittany was united to the Cro[w]n of France, the Congregation of the Priests of Saint-Louis took over the administration of Saint-Yve[s] Church and transferred the six non-beneficed priests and the revenue of Saint-Yve[s] to Saint-Louis Church.

It has followed from this change in administration that the church is being poorly served, for only the Pastor and one other priest reside on the premises, and the non-beneficed priests are dissolute.

Several persons of outstanding piety, seeing that the Priests of the Mission devote themselves not only to the salvation of the poor country people, but also to form priests in spiritual matters, practical theology, the ceremonies of the Church, preaching, and catechizing, think it would be a good work to give them the administration of Saint-Yve[s] Church, on condition that, and for as long as, they continue their duties and carry out the obligations of the church and the formation of the clergy, and nothing else.

The benefits that may accrue from this are: (1) the Church will be better served; (2) instead of the one priest who is there, there will sometimes be more than twelve; (3) the six non-beneficed Bretons will be formed in piety and service regarding ecclesiastical matters and will give assurance to His Holiness that the benefices in Brittany will be provided with good priests; (4) the devoted priests of that province who so desire will be able to find an assured retreat there to study and serve God in that place; (5) some way will be found to remedy the dissolute life they are leading at present and the harm they are doing in the parishes of their area to which they have

Document 89a. - Archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Paris, *Rome*, vol. 81, fol. 564; printed in *Annales C. M.* (1936), pp. 408-09.

¹The Ministry for Foreign Affairs added this title in the margin at that time; on the back of the same document is written "Report recommend[at]ions by M. Vincent."

been appointed, since the intention of His Holiness in assigning benefices is to prefer them to absentees.

There are no interested parties in this: the Pope finds in it the fulfillment of his plan; the King loses nothing by it, for he makes no appointment to any benefice; Brittany does well by it for it will have the same number of priests maintained in that church; Saint-Louis Church loses nothing by it, for, even though it may lose some of this revenue, it gets rid of an equal expense; the administrators lose by it only the disposal of the parish, which is nothing in comparison with the consolation they will have of seeing God better served; and the Pastor accepts and desires this, and is asking us insistently to do it.

89b. EXCERPT FROM THE WILL OF JEAN DUHAMEL¹

(April 23, 1643)

The following has been extracted from the last will and testament of the late noble man, the priest Jean Duhamel. It was signed before Bergeon and Richer, one of the undersigned notaries, on the eighteenth day of the present month and year; in it he appointed as its executrix Demoiselle Hélène Alméras, his mother, widow of the noble man Jean Duhamel:

He desires and ordains that his corpse be interred in the house of the reverend Priests of the Mission, called Saint-Lazare, in the place where M. Vincent, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, will decide, not considering himself worthy to be in the sanctuary of the church there with the other Priests of the Congregation because of the bad example he has given them during the time he has had the honor of being in their Company. He entreats him, nevertheless, that it be in a place where the priests of the Congregation pass on their way to their mental and vocal prayers in the church so that they will remember him in their prayers.

Document 89b. - Arch. Nat., M 211, fol. 1; printed in *Annales C. M.* (1936), pp. 698-99.

¹Jean Duhamel (cf. II, 33, n. 7).

As for his funeral procession, he leaves that to the will of Mlle. Duhamel, his mother, wishing that it take place decently and simply in accord with his station as a priest. On the day of his death, if possible, or the next day, he desires that one hundred Masses be said for his intention and one sou be given to each of the poor persons who are in the house at the time of his burial.

He gives and bequeaths to the Congregation of the Mission² of Saint-Lazare the sum of 1,000 livres, asking the Priests of this Congregation to have one Mass said annually for his intention and for the late M. Alméras his uncle, who gave them to him for this same intention. He asks also to have made for this purpose a chasuble, alb, amice, and everything else needed to vest the priest who will celebrate the anniversary Mass; the chasuble should be black for mourning and very simple, such as they would have made for themselves, even without a coat of arms.

Furthermore, he gives to the Congregation of the Fathers of the Mission the few books he has, except those of which he will dispose by the present testament, including a bible printed in Cologne, with a red morocco cover.

These bequests and others stated in the present testament will be carried out at the convenience of Mlle. Duhamel, his mother, when it pleases her and not otherwise.

This extract was drawn up and collated on the original record of the testament by the undersigned notaries of the King at the Châtelet of Paris this April 23, 1643, by Richer, one of them.

CHALLONS

RICHER

²The copy reads: *Maison* [house].

90. - FOUNDATION OF THE MARSEILLES HOUSE
BY THE DUCHESSE D'AIGUILLON

(July 25, 1643)

We the undersigned, Marie de Vignerod, Duchesse d'Aiguillon, Comtesse d'Agenais et Condomois on the one hand; and on the other, the admirable person Reverend Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, established at Saint-Lazare in this city of Paris, Antoine Portail, François du Coudray, René Alméras, and Emerand Bajoue, priests of the Congregation of the Mission, have drawn up, accepted, and agreed among ourselves on what follows:

Namely, that we, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, have had the wish and devotion to donate 14,000 livres *tournois* to be paid at one time and to be used for whatever they will find most useful and profitable, and which can bring in the greatest income for the purpose of incurring and paying the necessary expenses for the support, journeys, and works of the priests who will be employed in what will be stated hereafter. The condition is that the Priests of the Mission and their successors in the Saint-Lazare house will be bound always and in perpetuity to establish, provide room and board for, and support in the city of Marseilles four priests of the Congregation of the Mission, and, if they die, to send others in place of the deceased and so on successively in the place of each one who dies.

Those four priests, in accord with the will and intention of the King, will have authority over the chaplains and priests proposed who will be established to administer the sacraments and give the sermons, catechesis, instructions, and necessary help on the galleys of His Majesty. The four priests—or one of them—will have the power to remove those chaplains and clergy and to replace them with others they will choose and find more useful for the glory of God. The chaplains and clergy on the galleys will teach the catechism classes, give the instructions, and administer the sacraments.

The agreement rests also on the condition that, every five years—and not at longer intervals—the four priests of the Congregation of the Mission will board each of the galleys when they are in the port of Marseilles and other ports of the kingdom to catechize and instruct in the love and charity of God the poor convicts and others on the galleys. They will also question the chaplains and priests of the galleys and, when the chaplains or others are found unsuitable and incapable, to dismiss them and choose and establish the most worthy persons possible in their places. The four Priests of the Mission will also assume the care of the hospital for poor galley convicts, located in the city of Marseilles.

Likewise, on the express condition that the Priests of the Mission, always and in perpetuity, send some priests of the Congregation of the Mission to Barbary, when and if they judge proper, to console the poor Christian captives detained in those places and to instruct them in the faith, love, and fear of God. They will accomplish this through missions, catechesis, instructions, exhortations, Masses, and the prayers to which they are accustomed; also on condition that the Priests of the Mission offer two low Masses every day of the year, always and in perpetuity: one, a *Requiem* for the repose of the soul of the great Cardinal-Duc de Richelieu, her most honored uncle and benefactor, and to obtain the blessing of God on the entire household of His Eminence; the other, for the Duchess during her life and, after her death, for the repose of her soul and to ask God's mercy on us, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon. All of this is to be done to honor the words, miracles, and life of toil of Our Lord Jesus Christ while He was on earth.

And we, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, wishing to have our will and devotion implemented, proposed the above to the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, who agreed with our intention and devotion and said they were ready to accept the said sum, and, by means of this foundation, to implement and have implemented fully and entirely her intention and devotion. In line with this, we, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, have given and paid Vincent de Paul and the other Priests of the Mission named above the sum of 14,000 livres, and we [Vincent de Paul and the Priests of the Mission] acknowl-

edge having received it in cash from the Duchesse d'Aiguillon. We satisfy and release the Duchesse d'Aiguillon and all others from this, and by means of it we, Vincent de Paul and the other priests named above, have promised and will be bound by this, and do promise, for ourselves and our successors, to give or have someone give those missions in the places designated above; to offer or have offered two Masses each day of the year; and to carry out all the things herein specified, always and in perpetuity, according to her intention and for the reasons stated above. We also promise to use this sum for investments and an annual income, either in real estate or something else, for the advantage of the Priests of the Mission, in order to bring in some income for the fulfillment of the above, and by this act or contract of acquisition we declare that the money to be paid for the cost of this comes from the money thus received from the Duchesse d'Aiguillon.

Drawn up in Paris in the house belonging to us, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, July 25, 1643.

MARIE DE VIGNEROD
DU COUDRAY
BAJOUE

PORTAIL ALMÉRAS

VINCENT DEPAUL

**91. - APPOINTMENT OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL
OF THE MISSION
AS CHAPLAIN GENERAL OF THE GALLEYS**

(January 16, 1644)

Today, January 16, 1644, the King being in Paris, the Duc de Richelieu,¹ General of the Galleys of France, has pointed out to His Majesty that, given the great success and benefit received both for the glory of God and the instruction, edification, and salvation of the souls of all those who serve on the galleys, by the excellent choice formerly made of M. Vincent de Paul, Superior General of

Document 91. - Arch. Nat., S 6707, Marseilles file, copy.

¹Armand-Jean du Plessis, Duc de Richelieu (cf. VIII, 243, n. 3).

the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, for the office of Royal Chaplain of the galleys, to which he was appointed by royal warrant on February 8, 1619, with command over the other chaplains of the galleys; and given also that, because of his important duties with the King and the Queen Regent his mother,² who often call him to their Councils, as well as his office of Superior General of the Congregation, it is impossible for him to be in Marseilles at all times to carry out the duty of Royal Chaplain of the galleys. He needs to have the authority to entrust this duty, in his absence, to the Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Marseilles and to assign it permanently to the Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission now and to come. His Majesty, having approved the proposal of the General of the Galleys, and the Queen Regent his mother being of the same opinion, has confirmed M. Vincent de Paul in the office of Royal Chaplain of the galleys, with command over all other chaplains of the galleys and, in addition, has granted him the authority to dismiss the chaplains he will find unsuitable and to replace them with others. He may also, in his absence, entrust the Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Marseilles with the use of this privilege, with similar functions, authority, stipends, honors, and rights, and has assigned permanently the office of Royal Chaplain of the galleys of France, with similar power and authority, to the Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, present and to come. His Majesty wills that, in this capacity, he be inscribed and employed on the register of the galleys, by virtue of the letters patent that will be sent to him, in consequence of this one, which His Majesty has willed to sign with his own hand and to be countersigned by me, Councillor of his Council of State and Secretary of his Commands.

LOUIS

DE LOMÉNE

²Anne of Austria (1601-66).

92. - FOUNDATION OF THE SEDAN HOUSE

(June 14, 1644)¹

Louis,² by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, to our beloved and loyal Councillors, keepers of our accounts in Paris, greetings.

By his testament and the disposition of his last will, the late King³ of very glorious memory, our most honored Lord and father, bequeathed in alms the sum of 64,000 livres to be used for missions, namely, 24,000 livres for our town of Sedan, both to work there and strengthen the Catholics, and to try to lead back into the fold of the Church many souls whom heresy⁴ had turned away from it, and the remaining 40,000 livres to work in other missions in the places indicated by Reverend Fr. Dinet,⁵ Provincial of the Society of Jesus and His Majesty's confessor at the time, and Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission. With our consent, Fr. Dinet, occupied with various other duties, handed over the direction to him [Vincent de Paul] alone, taking into consideration that, without contravening in any way the intention of our late Lord and father, this good work, which he had intended for only ten years, might be permanent.

For these reasons, since the Queen Regent, our most honored Lady and mother, is of the same opinion, we stated and declared and do state and declare by these present letters, signed with our own hand, that we will, and it pleases us, to have the entire sum of 64,000 livres invested by the Superior General of the Mission, by him and his successors in the generalate in perpetuity, in annuities or legacy redemptions for the revenue accruing from this, and used for the

Document 92. - Archives of the Public Hospital of Sedan, copy made from the original.

¹Louis XIII, who died on May 14, 1643, assisted on his deathbed by his confessor, Fr. Jacques Dinet, S.J., and Saint Vincent (cf. II, 435, n. 9), had made a bequest to the Saint, which was ratified by Louis XIV on June 14, 1644. On April 27, 1645, the Saint notarized this document, which stipulated how the King's bequest was to be used for Sedan.

²Louis XIV.

³Louis XIII.

⁴The Huguenot religion.

⁵Jacques Dinet, S.J. (cf. IV, 178, n. 1).

food and maintenance of six priests and two Brothers belonging to the Mission, who, in conformity with the duties of their Institute, will be working at the time throughout our town of Sedan, as well as in its surrounding areas, where they will discover the most urgent need for the salvation of souls and the spread of the Apostolic Roman Catholic religion.

This we order you by these present letters, which you have to verify and register integrally and unconditionally, with no restriction or modification, and to allow the Father General of the Priests of the Mission and his successors in the office the full and perpetual enjoyment and use of what is contained in them, removing and putting a stop to all troubles and obstacles to the contrary; for such is our pleasure.

Given in Paris June 14, the year of grace 1644, and the first of our reign.

LOUIS

By mandate of the King, in the presence of the Queen Regent his mother.

DE GUÉNEGAUD,⁶ *Secretary of the Great Seal.*⁷

Today the admirable person Reverend Messire Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, living at Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, appeared before the undersigned notaries of our sire the King at the Châtelet of Paris. He stated and declared that, in accord with the letters patent from His Majesty, a copy of which, checked against the original, is written above, he used the sum of 64,000 livres for the construction of the buildings of thirteen houses⁸ adjoining one another. He had these built on a square called Saint-Laurent field, situated in the faubourg Saint-Denis of the city of Paris, above Saint-Lazare, abutting on

⁶Henri de Guénégaud du Plessis (cf. IV, 303, n. 1).

⁷The document that follows is the notarization of the bequest, signed by Saint Vincent, Pauzo, and Arsaut.

⁸During the Saint's lifetime, these thirteen houses (hence the name *Treize Maisons*) served as a home for the foundlings.

one side the property of M. Le Gras, and on another side the Saint-Lazare estates at one end in front, to the roadway of the faubourg leading to Saint-Denis en France, under the control of the fief of Saint-Lazare. These thirteen houses are to remain and belong to the Priests of the Mission of Sedan, to whom M. Vincent de Paul promises to invest profitably for always the sum of 2,200 livres annually each year for the upkeep of the Priests of the Mission established in Sedan, in accord with the intention of His Majesty expressed in the letters patent where it is stated. M. Vincent de Paul has requested and asked that a formal acknowledgment be granted him now for the use of the Priests of the Mission of Sedan.

Drawn up and signed at Saint-Lazare, Thursday afternoon, April 27, 1645.

VINCENT DEPAUL

PAUZO

ARSAUT

**92a. - OBJECTION TO THE ASSIGNMENT
OF THE GONESSE¹ PROPERTY
TO THE MARÉCHAL D'ESTRÉES²**

(Monday, December 12, 1644)³

At the request of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission established in the Priory of Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, be it declared to the Chancellor and to M. de Monceaux, Councillor of the King in his Councils and *Grand Audiencier* of France, that the priests hav-

Document 92a. - Archives of the Mission, Curia Generalitia, Via dei Capasso, 30, Rome, Mundelein-Cody Collection, original signed document.

¹Today, chief canton town of Val-d'Oise (Ile-de-France). Gonesse was one of at least seventeen farms and estates that were guaranteed sources of income for the Saint's projects for the poor and the numerous Religious Communities for which he was responsible: Congregation of the Mission, Daughters of Charity, Visitation nuns, Daughters of Providence, and Daughters of the Cross.

²On December 19, 1643, the Council had purchased a sumptuous mansion from the Maréchal d'Estrées; however, because of heavy war expenses, they were unable to pay him for it. It was the Maréchal who suggested getting the money by auctioning off the mills of Gonesse.

³The document is undated but on the back is written: "Opposition to. . . Notice served December 12, 1644."

ing been notified that His Majesty had made a gift to the Maréchal d'Estrée[s] or to someone else whose name he used, of the Gonesse property, from which the Priests of the Mission have the right to take annually two barrels of wheat, Paris measure, for this reason be it declared to the Chancellor and the *Grand Audiencier* that the Priests of the Mission are opposed to any donation of the Gonesse property being given under the name and in favor of anyone whomsoever, unless it be on condition that the priests be paid annually the two barrels of wheat, Paris measure, as stated in the donation made to them by letters patent of Louis VII, King of France and Duc d'Aquitaine, dating from the year 1147;⁴ taking up their residence in the person of M. Arnaut Roux, lawyer at the Council.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
unworthy Superior of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission

92b. - PETITION TO THE ROYAL COMMISSIONERS

June 19, 1645

To the Commissioners General deputed by His Majesty to implement the decision of the Council of April 26, 1645.

Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission established at the Priory of Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, presents this humble entreaty, stating that the property of the mills of Gonesse¹ belonging to His Majesty is assigned and mortgaged to Saint-Lazare Priory for two barrels of

⁴On June 11, 1147, the monk Odon records that Louis VII (1137-80), on his way to find the oriflamme of Saint-Denis, visited Saint-Lazare and granted various privileges. Other oppositions were raised, supported by the Parlement. The King wanted to put the estate up for auction; on June 19, 1645, M. Vincent sent a petition to oppose this, citing a second royal act, of Philippe-Auguste (1180-1223), in 1181. Nevertheless, the King decided to sell not only Gonesse but also the Provostship of Paris (cf. Doc. 92b).

Document 92b. - Private collection, original signed petition; photocopy given to the Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity May 3, 1994.

¹For centuries, the French Crown had possessed many estates. In April 1645 the Royal Council wanted to sell off parts of these lands to finance military efforts to fend off incursion into Lorraine. This prompted Saint Vincent to make this petition to the Commissioners General deputed by his Majesty for implementing the decision of the Council of April 26, 1645.

wheat as annual rent and dues, by the brief of Louis VII, of the year 1147; likewise the estate of His Majesty in the Provostship of Paris,² for the sum of 365 livres, similarly due to the priory, by another brief of King Philippe,³ of the year 1181.

For these reasons, my Lords, and because it has come to the knowledge of the petitioner that the properties are being sold before you, in consequence of a decree of the Council of last April 26,⁴ may it please you graciously to accept the opposition of the petitioner to the sale at auction of the properties, and by acceding to the aforesaid objection, to order that these properties shall be and shall remain designated for the Saint-Lazare Priory. Also, that the *receveurs*⁵ will continue payment in the future of the annual rents of two barrels of wheat on the one hand, and 365 livres on the other, according to and in keeping with the constitutions of rent stated in the briefs. And you will do well.

VINCENT DEPAUL

ROUX (*with paraph*)

Order is given that the present request be shown to the Procurator of the King in the Commission and communicated to the rival claimant so that this act may be ordered fairly.

Drawn up in the council room of the Château du Louvre in Paris, June 19, 1645.

CARRÉ (*with paraph*)

²This included the right to collect certain legal fees from the Châtelet of Paris.

³Philippe-Auguste. Earlier royal edicts earmarked part of the income from royal estates for the care of lepers (one of the functions of Saint-Lazare from its earliest foundation) and, from the time of the transfer of Saint-Lazare to the Congregation of the Mission, for various works of the Community. Saint Vincent was apparently very much aware of the legal basis for his sources of income.

⁴This is one of the many indications from letters and other documents of how closely Saint Vincent monitored his business affairs and felt compelled to take legal means to retain the various sources of income on which he depended.

⁵*Receveurs* [tax collectors] is written above *adjudicateur*, [seller], which was crossed out.

**92c. - APPROVAL OF A WORK BY JEAN-BAPTISTE NOULLEAU¹
CONDEMNING BLASPHEMY**

August [28] 1645

We, the undersigned, the Superior of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission and some members of our Saint-Lazare community, declare in the name of all that we have always desired the retrenchment of blasphemies and swearing. We laud the zeal of all those who are working at this and will work hereafter to put a stop to it. We affirm that we wish to do our part to cooperate in this during our missions, according to our modest ability, with the help of God, which we ask of Him for this purpose.

Given in Paris at our Saint-Lazare house on this feast of Saint Augustine,² the year of grace 1645.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

Superior of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission

A. LUCAS ALMÉRAS E. BAJOUÉ
LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX, *Priests of the Mission*

**93. - ADVICE TO BONIFACE NOUELLY¹ AND JEAN BARREAU²
BEFORE THEIR DEPARTURE FOR ALGIERS**

(Around May 1646)

M. Nouelly and Brother Barreau, whom the Providence of God is calling to Algiers for the corporal and spiritual assistance of all

Document 92c. - Jean-Baptiste Noulleau. *Conjuraton contre les blasphémateurs*. . . . (Paris: Gaillard, 1645). Saint Vincent and some of his confreres wrote one of the three approvals for this book, which were published in its preface. *Annales C. M.* (1934), pp. 252-53, printed this approval.

¹Doctor of Theology and Theologian for the Saint-Brieuc diocese.

²August 28.

Document 93. - *Mémoires de la Congrégation de la Mission* (Paris, 1863-99), bk II, p. 137.

¹Boniface Nouelly (cf. IV, 25, n. 2).

²Jean Barreau (cf. VIII, 261, n. 2).

Saint Vincent often refers to clerical students as "Brothers." The context usually determines whether the one referred to is a coadjutor Brother or a student destined for the priesthood. At other times, biographical information in *Notices*, vols. I and V (Supplement), allows us to make the appropriate judgment.

the Christian slaves there, will reflect that this ministry is one of the most charitable they might ever carry out on earth. (1) To fulfill it properly, they should have special devotion to the mystery of the Incarnation, whereby Our Lord came upon earth to assist us in our slavery, in which the evil spirit holds us captive; (2) they will be exact to the Rules of the Company and its holy customs and maxims, which are those of the Gospel, and work tirelessly to acquire the virtues that make a true Missionary: zeal, humility, mortification, and holy obedience; (3) M. Nouelly will be the Director of this little mission and will devote himself to the temporal and spiritual care of the sick, etc.; (4) when they get to Algiers, they will rent a house and set up a chapel in it; (5) they will endeavor to use every precaution imaginable in order to get along with the Viceroy, the Pasha, and the Divan³ and will willingly bear the insults they receive from the people; (6) they will strive to win over by patience the priests and religious who are enslaved and will see to it that they are held in the honor due them and that they retain their little benefits; (7) they will do all they can to maintain the greatest possible union among the merchants; (8) they will send us news of themselves with every boat that comes to France—not of the state of affairs of the country, but that of the poor slaves and the work Our Lord is entrusting to them.

(9) If, without any danger, they can go to visit the poor slaves who are in the rural areas, they will do so and will endeavor to strengthen and console them, giving them some alms for this purpose.

(10) They will submit to the laws of the country, except regarding religion, about which they will never argue, and will say nothing scornful about it.

(11) They will find out from those who have been living in that country for a long time anything that might anger those in power or give them any cause for suspicion or for provoking an *avania*,⁴ so as to avoid them.

³Council of State in Turkey and in other countries of the Middle East.

⁴Payment extorted by the Turks; an insult or affront.

94. - APPOINTMENT OF LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX
TO THE CONSULATE OF ALGIERS

(July 5, 1646)

Louis, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, Comte de Provence, Forcalquier, and the adjacent lands, to all who will read these present letters, greetings.

We make known that, because of the good report given us concerning the person of our dear and beloved Lambert aux Couteaux and his ability, loyalty, integrity, experience, and diligence, for these reasons and others prompting us to this, we have given and granted and do give and grant him by these present letters, signed with our own hand, the post and office of Consul for the French nation in Algiers and the Barbary coast, which Balthazar de Vias,¹ its last peaceful possessor, was formerly pleased to hold and carry out. Charles Moulard had negotiated with him by an Act signed last May 14 before Sausson, a notary in Marseilles; his resignation, here attached under the counterseal of our chancery, was then signed *to be tendered* in favor of Lambert aux Couteaux, allowing the latter to obtain, hold, carry out, use, and exercise the office, with the honors, powers, prerogatives, privileges, liberties, rights, benefits, revenues, and emoluments that come within its scope. This is in accord with the verifications of the Consuls in the area of Alexandria and Tripoli dependent on us, as long as it pleases us, provided that the one resigning live forty days after the date of the present letters.

Today we give orders to our beloved, loyal Count, the Lieutenant of our admiralty at Marseilles, that, after he has seen proof of the good life, morals, and Roman, Catholic, apostolic religion of Lambert aux Couteaux and has had him take the customary oath required in such a case, he should place and establish him, or have him placed and established, in the possession, submission of cases be-

Document 94. - Arch. Nat., *Marine collection*, B⁷ 49, fol. 401.

¹Balthazar de Vias (cf. VI, 208, n. 3). In 1627 he had received from his father the office of Permanent Consul of Algiers. Saint Vincent subsequently bought the consulate from M. de Vias for Lambert aux Couteaux, with the financial assistance of the Duchesse d'Aiguillon. As seen here, Louis XIV immediately ratified the contract. In the end, Lambert aux Couteaux never went to Algiers.

fore the court, and exercise of the office, together with the aforesaid honors, powers, prerogatives, privileges, exemptions, liberties, benefits, revenues, and emoluments, allowing him to exercise it peacefully and fully, and to see that he is obeyed and heard by all those concerned in matters dealing with and regarding this office.

For this purpose, we ask our very dear good friend, the King of Algiers, to permit Lambert aux Couteaux to carry out the office, not allowing him to be troubled or hindered in any way; for such is our pleasure.

In witness whereof we have ordered our seal to be affixed to these present letters.

Given in Paris on July 5, the year of grace 1646, and the fourth of our reign.

LOUIS

95. - FUNCTIONS OF THE ROYAL CHAPLAIN OF THE GALLEYS

(July 1646)

Louis, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre. . . . By these present letters we have declared that spiritual direction for the consolation of the sick, the administration of the sacraments, the celebration of Holy Mass, and the burial of the dead will, in the future, be within the scope of the duties of the Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission and Royal Chaplain of our galleys, since it has always been within the authority of the Royal Chaplain, which he has exercised over the galleys, officers, soldiers, sailors, and convicts, under the authority of the local Ordinaries.

In the absence of our Royal Chaplain, we will that the Superior of the Mission in our city of Marseilles should assume the administration or direction and exercise the duty of Royal Chaplain. We have united and do unite this office, in perpetuity, with all its rights, honors, dignities, and privileges, to the Congregation of the Priests of the

Mission, to be carried out by the Superior General and, in his absence, by the Superior of the Mission in Marseilles, empowered by him to do so. And, in order that the sick convicts may be better assisted by this, the Priests of the Mission who will be needed to serve them will take up residence in the hospital . . . and, for what concerns spiritual matters, not only in the hospital but even on all the galleys.

We very expressly will and enjoin our Royal Chaplain to see to it that each galley has a good priest as chaplain—one who is wise, exemplary, experienced in the practice of the direction of souls, and approved by the Ordinary—that each chaplain in turn visit the sick in the hospital, according to the order prescribed for them by the Royal Chaplain; and that, in order to fulfill their ministry better, all the chaplains should live together in community under the direction and leadership of our Royal Chaplain. In the event that the chaplains of the galleys are found to lack the necessary qualifications and conditions or have not been living as good priests, the Royal Chaplain will provide the galleys with another good priest in the place of those whom he judges unsuitable, in virtue of the authority we grant him for this by these present letters. The stipends of the chaplains of the galleys will be entrusted to the Royal Chaplain and distributed by him to the chaplains. . . .

Given in Fontainebleau, in the month of July, the year of grace 1646.

LOUIS

**96. - REGULATIONS FOR THE PRIESTS OF THE MISSION
IN MARSEILLES
WHO MINISTER TO THE GALLEY CONVICTS**

So that the Priests of the Mission may fulfill their duties toward the chaplains and toward the galley convicts, here are the principal responsibilities they must carry out when they visit the galleys:

(1) To inquire whether prayers are said morning and evening on the galleys and whether, during them, everyone is in the proper attitude to hear them.

(2) Whether anyone blasphemes the name of God, despite the prohibitions against this, and whether the officers make the offenders pay the fine.

(3) Whether the chaplains are careful to visit and comfort the sick often, hear their confessions, and assist the dying, and whether they come on the eves of Holy Days to hear the confessions of the rowers chained to their benches.

(4) To find out whether there are any converted heretics, to speak with them and encourage them to persevere and to receive the sacraments frequently; to do likewise if there are any Turks¹ who are converted and newly baptized.

(5) To see if the chaplains celebrate Holy Mass on all Sundays and Holy Days, whether they attend Vespers, or whether they [the convicts] can say them without them.

(6) To ask whether there are any heretics who visit the galleys to converse with those who side with them.

(7) To find out also whether there are any heretics or Turks who may be disposed to come into the Church, in order to procure for them the necessary instruction.

(8) To inquire whether there are any sick and if they have been to confession, whether doctors and surgeons visit them and treat their illnesses, and if they are given soup, meat, and the bread to which they have a right.

(9) To inquire whether they are dissolute on Sundays and Holy Days, and if gambling and the sale of certain articles is allowed before Holy Mass.

(10) Whether women or young men are allowed on the galleys, and if any of these young men are permitted to spend the night there.

(11) Care must be taken to ensure that all the galley convicts have shirts, underwear, smocks, cloaks, hats, and stockings; note also whether there is a double canvas in the galleys; ask whether the

¹The term *Turk* was often used to indicate any Moslem slave.

bread they are given is of the prescribed weight and is fresh, and whether they are given beans daily. However, this and the two preceding articles must be investigated at a time when the officers are not present.

(12) To inquire about the invalids on the galleys, and be present during the commissioners' visits in order to appeal for their release. Such visits are to be made twice a year, in the months of March and October;

(13) To be also present on these galleys especially on the day before the eve and on the eves of the major Holy Days of the year in order to encourage the galley convicts to go to confession, and to find some confessors to assist the chaplains, particularly the Italians and the Spanish. In order to make it easier for them to go to confession and Communion, have them given some exhortations on the Sundays preceding the said Holy Days and as often as possible throughout the course of the year;

(14) Finally, to strive during each visit to console some of the most afflicted, such as those who have little time left, and to offer some prayers to God for them;

(15) When something that needs to be remedied on the galleys is remarked, to notify the Company, and, if it is urgent, to consult its Superior in order to do whatever is necessary to remedy the situation, depending on their advice.

97. - DUTIES OF THE CONSULS AND MISSIONARIES IN BARBARY

The Consul has under his protection not only the French, but also all Christian nations that have recourse to him against the affronts of the barbarians, and the Consul points out to the Dey, the Pasha, or the Customs House¹ the injustice committed against them. He reg-

Document 97. - Arch. Nat., S 6707, notebook from around 1670. This account of the works of the Missionaries in Barbary is probably from Saint Vincent.

¹The Dey was the head of the Algerian government before 1830; the Pasha governed a province in the Turkish Empire; the Customs House oversaw the administration of customs duties.

isters complaints about the ill-treatment given them. He negotiates the ransom of slaves and has their chains removed so they can be sent home. He settles disputes among the merchants of those nations. He makes sure that no Christian merchant brings the Turks contraband merchandise forbidden by the canons of the Church and the ordinances of the King.

The Priests of the Mission attend to spiritual matters. They are apostolic missionaries, established by authority of the Sovereign Pontiff, who gives them full power and all the faculties proper to this duty. They are Vicars-General of the Archdiocese of Carthage, and in this capacity have jurisdiction over all the priests and religious who are slaves; they are also Pastors of all the Christian merchants and slaves, whose number is very large.

They uphold the Catholic religion and maintain its public and private practices in those places where it is persecuted, and they devote themselves to confirming and strengthening believers in the faith. They administer the sacraments to the healthy and to the sick. They preach, give instructions, and do everything possible for the spiritual and physical relief of the wretched slaves.

97a. - PETITION TO THE PARLEMENT

(April 1647)¹

To Our Lords of the Parlement.

The priest Vincent de Paul, Superior of the Mission established at Saint-Lazare, humbly petitions, stating that he has done everything possible until now to implement the decree of June 2, 1646,² after due hearing of the parties, according to M. Gontier, Court

Document 97a. - Arch. Nat., S 6114, copy. Because of the nature of this document, the editors have moved it from vol. III, Appendix 1, to this location.

¹Date given in the body of the request.

²This petition is a continuation of the legal proceedings of the Congregation of the Mission against Noël Bonhomme with regard to the Nom-de-Jésus Hospice (cf. vol. II, Appendix 2, pp. 684-87, and Appendix 4, pp. 690-92).

Counselor, but Noël Bonhomme has done the exact opposite to prevent it. Thus, although the petitioner has entered into payment for the sum of 11,000 livres mentioned in the decree, for the discharge of Bonhomme's debts toward some of his creditors, and committed himself to furnish replevins³ from others who had seized the rest of the aforementioned sum of 11,000 livres, he has, nevertheless, managed so well that he still remains in possession of the house, garden, and property of which there is question of being awarded to the petitioner. And to add to the deception, he himself had seized from the hands of the petitioner what the man named Nicolas Janot was claiming as belonging to him from the monies owed by the petitioner.

Thus, this seizure and the contentions that had arisen between him and Janot have given rise to a number of harassments suffered by the petitioner who, although he found no advantage in them, was obliged to defend himself first in one place, then in another, where he consistently stated, to Bonhomme, first of all, that he was prepared to pay the difference by furnishing the release of the seizures presented against him, as he had committed himself to do. To Janot he likewise declared that, in settling the differences he had with Bonhomme, he was also prepared to hand over to the person appointed by the court the monies awarded to him, not exceeding what remained in his possession.

Thus, the petitioner in this agreement had no need to be included in their proceedings. Nevertheless, Janot had served him a subpoena to appear before M. Ferrand the Counselor, where the petitioner renewed his offers. In order that a decision might be made with Bonhomme himself concerning the possession the petitioner was claiming of the goods awarded to him for the sum of 11,000 livres by the decree of June 2, 1646, the petitioner summoned him and declared against him. So, by a decree issued according to the report of M. Ferrand the Counselor on January 8, 1647, it was ordered among other things that the petitioner, in paying what was due by Bonhomme to his daughter, Hélène Bonhomme, and by reason of

³Legal action for the recovery of goods or chattels wrongfully taken or detained.

which she had foreclosed to the petitioner, would remain clearly and validly released, and once the petitioner had consigned into the hands of a townsman, named officially or by common consent, what remained of the sum of the 1,100 livres in question, or which the petitioner retained for six months, and paying the interest on the monies, the petitioner could enter into possession and use of the house, garden, and property in question. Bonhomme would then be obliged to hand over the keys and the property in the same condition they were at the time of the inspection made in execution of the decree of June 11, except in the case of contestation, in whole or in part, of the valuation of the possessions contained therein, before M. Gontier the Counselor, court reporter of the decree.

In execution of this decree the petitioner paid what was due to Hélène Bonhomme, and consequently took the option of retaining the difference of the monies for the time and under the conditions of the decree of January 8. Bonhomme, however, who does not yield easily, seeing that he was obliged to allow the petitioner the use of the property in question, instead of handing over the keys to him, according to the terms of the decree, refused to do so. As a result, the petitioner registered his appeal on March 19, 1647, and the court ordered that the parties would be heard summarily before M. Ferrand the Counselor. When Bonhomme saw that he was being prosecuted, he resumed and proceeded with the objection he had raised the preceding January 21 against the implementation of the decree of January 8. Given this objection, he had proceedings instituted to respond before M. Gontier.

This, however, is not the object of the petitioner's complaint because what matters to him is not who hears the case, but rather that he is being harassed without cause, since he has no way of paying effectively what he has in his hands and of assuming use of what has been awarded him. So, it seems that what has happened since this objection and the request for the keys for admission to the properties in question should change the contestation and put an end to the disagreements of the parties, for, by means of the payment made by the petitioner to Hélène Bonhomme, as has been stated, the petitioner was informed on April 3 of three official notices dated this

past January 21, March 11, and March 26. These mention the release of seizures and operations executed and presented into the hands of the petitioner by Nicolas Cavalier and Anne Forêt, Nicolas Janot and Marguerite Caulier, Jean de Bournay, his widow, and his heirs, and Hélène Bonhomme. Thus, all the petitioner desires is that the decree of June 2, 1646, be implemented and Bonhomme be required to give release of the seizures and decrees that are still in his hands. One of these, among others, concerns a certain Nicolas Simon, a plasterer, for a sum of 60 livres by a writ of June 27, 1646, and by another writ dated November 27, 1646, from a man named Nicolas Simon,⁴ the clauses of which are not expressed. Also to be settled are the appreciations awarded to Bonhomme, the depreciations on them to be compensated, as well as the three and a half years' arrears due on the first of this month of April 1647, rents and revenues due from Bonhomme by reason of the properties in question, in the amount of 65 livres in revenue and 2 sous 9 deniers income for a total of 227 livres 19 sous 8 deniers, plus arrears fallen due since then and which will continue to fall due until the day the petitioner effectively takes possession. Added to this is the sum of 120 livres consigned by the petitioner, that has been used for the trial of the case, in which the decree of June 2 was pronounced, according to M. Gontier the Counselor. There is also the interest, at the rate of the judge's ruling, on the monies paid to the abovenamed Paillet, Soulet, and Hélène Bonhomme, starting from the day they were paid, whereas Bonhomme has been in possession of the property in question, and whereas the petitioner, by paying as he has done, has entered into the place and rights of Paillet, Soulet, and Bonhomme, to whom the interest was due.

Lastly, there are expenses to be reimbursed, deducted, and compensated, which the petitioner was obliged to incur for the implementation of the decrees and up to the day of the release of the seizures made and still to be made by Noël Bonhomme on his account, since the petitioner has never been in arrears of paying the 11,000 livres in question.

⁴This name was probably inadvertently written for another name.

Considering this, my Lords, along with what is represented above, it is easy to see that there are no further questions to adjudicate between the parties which cannot easily be settled and concluded, since the petitioner is quite ready to hand over and pay whatever remains in his hands to the man called Janot and those in whose names he is proceeding, to the exoneration of Bonhomme and with his consent, as also to reach a settlement and compensation with Bonhomme of the things he must take into consideration, including the remainder of the 1,100 livres and whatever will be awarded him for his improvements, with deductions for delapidations.

To this end the parties will be obliged to retire to the chambers of Païsant the notary, who received the first receipts on the appointed day. Bonhomme will be obliged to seek out Janot to receive what is due to him, sign the receipts and, on the appointed day, furnish the release of seizures which may have been executed against the petitioner by the Act of Bonhomme, apart from those of which he had a copy given on April 3, and even of those noted above. On failure to be present when the writ is served, or in the case of a refusal and contestation by Bonhomme, with no need of any further effort by the petitioner, retaining the remaining monies and the interest from them as stated in the decree of last January 8, the petitioner will be permitted to enter into possession and use of the properties in question, and Bonhomme imprisoned for debt after a simple summons and obliged to hand over the keys; otherwise entry will be forced in the usual way. Bonhomme will be sentenced to pay any damages and interest incurred and to be incurred by the petitioner, notwithstanding the appeal of Bonhomme, who will have no case and will be ordered to pay all costs.

May it please you graciously to grant the petitioner title to all the documents and exhibits of the injunction, even of the garnishee order of June 2, 1646, and the use of those he had drawn up before M. Ferrand, on the appeal of March 17, to be settled and granted on March 26, as well as Bonhomme's appeal of September 6, 1646, settled before M. Gontier. As far as the contents of the present petition are concerned, may everything be complied with in one and the

same decree, which the court will recognize as being properly done, and you will do well.⁵

97b. - PETITION TO THE PARLEMENT

(July 1647)¹

To Our Lords of the Parlement.

The priest Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission established at Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, humbly petitions, stating that, having been informed of the rejoinders issued by Noël Bonhomme, served to the attorney of the petitioner on July 11, he has found the justifications and means therein only tiresome repetitions, contrary to the truth. With all due respect to the court, it is a pure fabrication on Bonhomme's part to state and sustain that the garnishments made into the hands of the petitioner were reported by him to avoid payment of the sum awarded to Bonhomme. The contrary is apparent both from the truth of the garnishments brought forward and adduced by the petitioner, and because those who made the seizure are genuine creditors of Bonhomme. In fact, the garnishee orders state that the petitioner will pay them, as he has done. There are still some existing garnishee orders whose cancellation Bonhomme himself admits he is pursuing. It is strange, therefore, that he alleges boldly that these are chicaneries being used against him.

It is, however, even more unreasonable to state that he should be paid damages, interest, and expenses for this. On the contrary, these are due to the petitioner for two reasons: first, because he is obliged to bear the brunt of an infinity of proceedings on the part of the creditors, resulting from the action of Bonhomme, who is burdened with

⁵Written at the end of the request: "Let it be enacted and notice be given. April 9, 1647."
Document 97b. - Arch. Nat., S 6114, copy. Because of the nature of this document the editors have moved it from vol. III, Appendix 2, to this location.

¹Note 2 informs us of the month and year of the petition.

debts and, consequently, obliged to bear all the expenses and compensate the petitioner for them. Second, because of all these setbacks and harassments, the petitioner finds himself reduced to a strange extremity: even though he has paid the cost of the reimbursement, he still does not enjoy possession, and Bonhomme, by an unparalleled injustice, still remains in possession and proprietorship of the house and property of which he was dispossessed by decree. This cannot persist because the pretext he advances of alleged improvements (which exist more in his imagination than in reality) is not sufficient to sustain this unjust retention and possession, since the petitioner has paid the principal cost, and very little remains to be paid, which makes him the master and proprietor of the house.

As for Bonhomme's remaining claims regarding the improvements, he must not proceed except in execution of a decree. This can be done just as well when the petitioner is in possession as when he is not; otherwise the judgments pronounced on the eviction will be useless and fallacious, since they have no effect, and some point of law is always arising on the part of the creditors of Bonhomme. Furthermore, the latter will do all he can so as not to withdraw from or relinquish the house. This will greatly wrong the petitioner; even though the court may award him damages and interest (as he hopes and expects from its justice), nevertheless, the most expedient step for him to take would be to enter into possession of the property, which he has acquired so justly, and so onerously. Had he been able to foresee all these various caviling points of law which have been brought against him, he would not have undertaken the repurchase of the property because he thought, in fact, that all he had to do was to pay out his money, which he was always prepared to do.

This having been considered, my Lords, may it please you to give official notice to the petitioner that, as a decision against the above allegations, he may make use of the present petition, written and brought forward by him. And you will do well.²

²A note follows: "Let it be enacted. Drawn up July 1647. *Note:* the decision is not indicated."

**98. - AUTHORIZATION FOR CHARLES NACQUART
AND NICOLAS GONDREE TO TRAVEL TO MADAGASCAR**

(March 30, 1648)

Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, to the beloved confreres in Christ, Messieurs Charles Nacquart and Nicolas Gondrée, priests of our Congregation, greetings in the Lord.

According to our Institute, we are bound to devote ourselves to procuring the salvation of souls wherever God has called us by a special plan, chiefly in places where the need is greater and other evangelical workers are lacking. We are aware, moreover, [that] in the Indies, especially on the island of Madagascar, known otherwise as Saint-Laurent, there is a very great scarcity of workers and the harvest is abundant,¹ both with regard to encouraging Catholics in the faith, and to inviting pagans to the Catholic faith. We desire to comply with the divine call especially since we have been sought after and requested for this mission by the Most Illustrious and Reverend Lord the Apostolic Nuncio² to our Most Christian King and by those honorable men who, in agreement with the Most Christian King, attend to the temporal affairs of the Indies.

Assured, therefore, of your piety, erudition, experience, and zeal for souls we have sent and, by the present letters, do send you to the aforesaid island and other parts of the Indies so that, in line with the functions of our Institute, you may, with the grace of God, apply yourselves with all your strength to the salvation of souls. On this account we ask Their Excellencies the Bishops, the Pastors, and others placed in charge of the churches to permit all or each of you to celebrate Mass, administer the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, especially to those men who, with you, are passing

Document 98. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Madagascar file, copy, written in Latin. The copyist added at the end of this document: "Note that this patent was written in haste since the Madagascar voyage was arranged very quickly, with the result that there was no time to get all the required permissions for it. That is why those granted to other Missionaries who departed for the same mission were subsequently reformulated."

¹Cf. Mt 9:37. (NAB)

²Nicolò di Bagno.

through to the island, and perform the rest of the services of our Institute, since it is clear that all of you are free from ecclesiastical censure. In addition, we ask in the Lord that all Kings, Viceroy, Governors, Mayors, Chiefs of neighboring areas, and guardians of cities and roads, see fit to grant the faculty and permission to come and go freely and safely through their provinces, lands, and seaports for love of Him who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.³ Meanwhile, we and our Congregation will pray fervently for their well-being.

In witness to the present letters we have signed them with our own hand and have ordered them to be secured with our seal.

Given in Paris on March 30, 1648.

**99. - AUTHORIZATION FOR SEVERAL PRIESTS AND BROTHERS
TO TRAVEL TO VARIOUS ESTABLISHMENTS**

(April 5, 1648)

Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, to the beloved brothers in Christ Jean-Jacques Mugnier and Gabriel Damiens, priests; Pasquier Blondel, Michel Doutrelet, Edme Jolly, François Pinson, Emmanuel Chardon, Jacques Pesnelle and Michel Giroud, seminarians; and Robert Coutieu, René Champion, and Jean Duchesne, Brothers; all members of our Congregation, greetings in the Lord.

We, who, in virtue of our office, have the obligation to send workers of our Congregation to houses where they are needed, are aware that some are needed in our houses both in Italy and in Marseilles. Confident of the integrity, ability, and competence of all of you, we have decided to send you to these houses, and, by these present letters, do send you: M. Jean-Jacques Mugnier to our house in Marseilles, Brother Robert Coutieu to our house in Genoa, and the rest of you mentioned above to Rome, the priest Gabriel

³Cf. 1 Tm 6:15; Rv 17:14. (NAB)

Document 99. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed document, written in Latin.

Damiens and the seven seminarians, together with the two Brothers, to remain in each house under obedience to the present Superiors, according to the Rules of our Institute. We therefore order the Superiors of those houses to receive you kindly and count you among the persons we have entrusted to them.

We have been duly informed also of the piety and competence of the priest, M. . . .¹ Paussin, who has spent some months at our Bons-Enfants Seminary, founded in Paris. Inflamed with zeal for souls, he has asked us if he could go to Marseilles to help those who were condemned to the galleys, so we are also sending him with you for this work.

In addition, we ask our Bishops, Pastors, and those responsible for the other churches to allow the priests among you to celebrate Mass in their churches [and] to administer the sacraments to your associates, since it has been established that you are free of any ecclesiastical censure. We also ask in the Lord all Governors and Viceroys in charge of the territories and cities and all prefects of guardposts of the seaports to allow you to come and go safely through their territories, provinces, and ports, and to treat you favorably for love of Him who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We on earth, together with our Congregation, will pray fervently to Him for their well-being.

In witness to the present letters we have signed them below with our own hand and have ordered them to be secured with our seal.

Given in Paris on April 5, 1648.

VINCENTIUS A PAULO,
Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission

¹The space reserved for the first name was left blank on the original.

**100. - ESTABLISHMENT BY PROPAGANDA FIDE
OF THE MADAGASCAR MISSION**

(July 20, 1648)

Whereas the Most Eminent Lord Cardinal Sforza has presented the letters of the Nuncio to France¹ regarding the mission to the island of Saint-Laurent, or Madagascar, of Reverend Charles Nacquart, priest of the Soissons diocese, together with his companion, Reverend Nicolas Gondrée, likewise a priest of the Congregation of Priests of the Mission, under the direction and guidance of Reverend Vincent de Paul; the Sacred Congregation, after accepting the explanation as to why the aforesaid mission was established without its own decree, has decided to set it up anew, as having been done invalidly, as indicated below:

(1) It has determined the mission for the priest Charles Nacquart, together with his companion Nicolas Gondrée, approved by the Nuncio for the aforesaid island, delegating and appointing Charles Nacquart as director of the mission, and has ordered that the Holy Office be approached regarding faculties.

(2) It has ordered that the decree of the mission and the faculties be forwarded to the Nuncio, with the attached mandate not to send the decree and faculties to Nacquart until due diligence has been taken to ascertain whether the Discalced Carmelites, who were to be sent to that island to whom it had been entrusted previously as a mission, cannot be sent with the merchants, even after provision for the journey was offered on their behalf.

(3) Nevertheless, so that the above-mentioned Missionaries may not remain idle on the island, the Sacred Congregation has granted the same Nuncio the power to communicate to them at least the necessary faculties of hearing confessions and administering the sacraments to the people, in accordance with what was contained in the decree of the Holy Office.

Document 100. - Archives of the Mission, Madagascar file, written in Latin.

¹Nicolò di Bagno.

**101. - FACULTIES¹ GRANTED BY PROPAGANDA FIDE
TO NICOLAS DUPORE FOR THE MADAGASCAR MISSION**

(1650)

(1) To dispense in any irregularities, with the exception of those that arise from actual bigamy or voluntary homicide, and in these two cases they may do so in case of necessity if, however, no scandal arises from a dispensation of this kind, with respect to homicide.

(2) To dispense and commute simple vows, even chastity, for a reasonable cause, in all other works, but not the vow of religion.

(3) To absolve and dispense in any case of simony and in tangible matters when benefices have been resigned and other gains have been ill-acquired, by imposing some alms or a salutary penance in the judgment of the one dispensing, even to retain benefices, if they were parochial and no one else can be put in charge of the parishes.

(4) To dispense in the third and fourth degree of consanguinity and affinity, simple and mixed, and in the second, third, and fourth in the case of mixed marriages, but in the second only with regard to future marriages. As for past [marriages], even in the second degree, only in the case of those who are converted from heresy or infidelity to the Catholic faith, and in the aforesaid cases, to declare legitimate the offspring already born.

(5) To dispense from the impediment of public propriety arising from espousals.

(6) To dispense from the impediment of crime, when neither of the spouses plotted evil; and restitution of conjugal rights.

(7) To dispense in impediments of spiritual relationship, except between the parent and the [adopted] child.

(8) But these last marriage dispensations—the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh [above]—may not be granted without the clause: *Provided the woman has not been abducted and, if she has, that she*

Document 101. - Archives of the Mission, Madagascar file, written in Latin. These same faculties, with the exception of the twenty-sixth, were given to Claude Dufour and Jean-François Mousnier on February 20, 1653.

¹Habitual faculties granted perpetually are considered as privileges outside the common law. Privilege means some provision of the common law which gives special rights to certain persons beyond what the law allows.

is no longer under the power of the abductor, nor in each forum [internal and external] where there are Bishops, but only in the forum of conscience; and in expediting these things, the tenor of this kind of faculty should be inserted in the dispensations with a statement of the time for which they have been granted.

(9) To dispense, in the case of heathens or infidels having several wives, so that after their conversion and baptism they may be able to keep whichever one they prefer, if she also becomes a Christian, unless the first of them wished to be converted.

(10) To absolve all kinds of persons, even Catholics, secular as well as regular, from heresy and apostasy from the faith and from schism, but not those who may be from places over which the Holy Office has charge, unless they have done wrong in places in mission territory where heresies abound with impunity, nor those who legally abjured, unless they were born where heresies abound and, having returned there after judicial abjuration, have relapsed into heresy, and to dispense them only in the forum of conscience.

(11) To absolve from all cases reserved to the Apostolic See, even those contained in the Bull *Coena Domini*.

(12) To bless vestments and other articles necessary for the Sacrifice of the Mass.

(13) To reconcile desecrated churches with water blessed by a Bishop, and in case of necessity, with water not blessed by a Bishop, and to communicate the same faculty to simple priests.

(14) To consecrate chalices, patens, and portable altars with oils blessed by a Bishop in places where there are no Bishops, or where they are two days' journey away, or where the See is vacant.

(15) To dispense, when it seems advisable, with regard to eating meat, eggs, and milk products in a period of fasting, especially during Lent.

(16) To celebrate Mass twice daily if necessity dictates, in such a way, however, that in the first Mass the ablutions are not consumed; from one hour before dawn and another after noon, on a portable altar and without a server, in the open air and even below ground—yet in a becoming place, even if an altar has been built, or one without relics of saints, or if heretics, schismatics, infidels and

excommunicated persons are present, provided the server is not a heretic or excommunicated, and if there can be no celebration otherwise.

(17) To grant a plenary indulgence to those newly converted from heresy, and also, at the moment of death, to any of the faithful who, if they are unable to confess, are at least contrite.

(18) To grant a plenary indulgence during the Forty Hours devotion to be proclaimed three times a year on the most convenient days, for those who are contrite and have been to confession and nourished by the reception of Holy Communion, provided, however, that, in case of a large crowd of people and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, there is no probable suspicion of sacrilege by heretics or infidels and no offense against the public authority.

(19) To gain these same indulgences for oneself.

(20) To celebrate a Requiem Mass on any altar, even portable, every Monday that does not have a nine-Lesson Office; or, if those days are impeded, on the day immediately following, with the intention of freeing a soul from the punishment of purgatory, by way of a suffrage.

(21) To carry the Blessed Sacrament privately to the sick without a candle and to reserve it also without a candle for these same sick persons, but in a place that is fitting, if there be danger of sacrilege by heretics or infidels.

(22) To wear secular clothing, if the person is unable to pass through or remain in mission territories in any other way.

(23) To recite the rosary or other prayers if the person cannot bring a breviary with him or is not well enough to recite the Divine Office because of some legitimate impediment.

(24) To keep and read—but not pass on to others—the books of heretics or infidels treating of their own religion, for the purpose of refuting them, and other books prohibited in any way, except the works of Carlos Molina, Nicolò Machiavelli, and books on fortune telling, dealing with it principally or incidentally, or otherwise in any way, provided that the books are not lent out of those districts.

(25) To administer all the sacraments, even parochial, with the exception of Holy Orders and Confirmation; and for what refers to

parochial sacraments, in dioceses where there may be no Bishops, Ordinaries, or their Vicars, or in parishes where there are no Pastors, or, in places where there are Pastors, with their permission.

(26) To communicate these faculties, in whole or in part, to their companions in the mission, especially at the time of his death, so that in the interim there may be someone who can fill in until the Apostolic See, having been informed of this, will provide in another way through a delegate. This should be done as soon as possible, and also to revoke the faculties communicated, if need be.

(27) To use these same faculties only in the territories of their own missions.

(28) All the aforesaid faculties are to be exercised free of charge, with no remuneration, and are understood to be granted for fifteen years only.

102. - RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT IN MARSEILLES

(July 9, 1650)

On July 9, 1650, certain resolutions were taken in Paris by M. Vincent, Superior General; M. Bausset,¹ Provost of the Major² and Administrator of the hospital; M. Portail, priest of the Congregation of the Mission; and the Duchesse d'Aiguillon concerning our establishment in this city and regarding the hospital.

(1) Whether the direction of the hospital, for both spiritual and temporal matters, should be given to the Fathers of Charity³ or be left as it is at present; that is, whether the Priests of the Mission should take care of spiritual matters and temporal affairs be under the management of the Administrators:

Document 102. - Arch. Nat., S 6707, notebook from around 1670.

¹Pierre de Bausset, chief medical officer of the military hospital in Marseilles.

²The Cathedral of Marseilles.

³Administrators of the hospital.

It was decided by the Provost, M. Vincent, M. Portail, and the Duchesse d'Aiguillon that the hospital would remain as it is now, in accord with its institution and the letters patent of His Majesty.

(2) Will it be necessary to put there one priest or two? Should they be outsiders or from the house?

It was decided unanimously to leave this up to M. Vincent, who will arrange it as he will see fit, and that there will always be at least two of them.

(3) Their duties in the hospital:

It was decided that they will do everything stated in the letters patent and will demand good conduct of the servants, in conformity with the articles agreed upon with the late M. de la Coste⁴ and the Administrators.

(4) Concerning the residence and lodging of those priests as well as the ones at the seminary and the chaplains of the galleys:

It was decided that some of the money from the 15,000 livres income allocated by the King by letters patent will be used to complete the hospital and to build a new wing there for the priests. And because the functions of the seminary and the chaplains come under the Bishop, and because the place is exempt from his jurisdiction since it is in the judicial territory of Saint-Victor Abbey, the Duchess will take the trouble to write about this to the Archbishop of Lyons⁵ asking him to agree to place this house under the jurisdiction of the Bishop. In the event that he does not agree, the priests will stay where they are at present in the city.

(5) Concerning attendance at the conferences:

It was decided that the Superior of the Mission will go with the Administrators of the hospital to the conferences where both the spiritual and the temporal affairs of the hospital will be discussed.

⁴Gaspard de Simiane de la Coste (cf. III, 295, n. 2). It was to Saint Vincent, to Bishop Jean-Baptiste Gault of Marseilles, and, in particular, to de la Coste that the establishment of the Hospital for Galley Convicts in Marseilles was due.

⁵Camille de Neufville de Villeroy.

He, along with the Administrators, will have a deliberative vote there, so that what is decided by them will be implemented.⁶

**103. - SAFE-CONDUCT FOR MISSIONARIES
SENT TO CHAMPAGNE AND PICARDY**

(February 14, 1651)

By order of the King.

His Majesty has been informed that the inhabitants of most of the villages along his borders of Picardy and Champagne are reduced to begging and absolute destitution, as a result of being victims of the pillaging and hostilities of the enemy and all the armies who have passed through and camped there. Several churches have been plundered and despoiled of their furnishings, and many persons from his fine city of Paris are giving outstanding, generous alms to sustain and feed poor persons and to repair the churches. These alms are being used very profitably by the Priests of the Mission and other charitable persons sent to the places where there is the greatest destruction and disease, with the result that a large number of those indigent persons have been helped in their need and illness. While this was being done, however, the soldiers, passing through or camping in the places where the Missionaries were, stole and destroyed the church vestments and provisions of food, clothing, and other things intended for persons who are poor, so much so that, if

⁶The copyist added: "These regulations were signed by Messieurs Vincent, Bausset, and Portail, and by the Duchesse d'Aiguillon; the original is among our papers. It should be noted here that, when the above decisions were taken, the Priests of the Mission were living in the city, where they had resided for a very long time, first at the hospital, then in a house a short distance from the hospital, later near Saint-Victor, afterward a little farther away, and, lastly, in the place opposite the Carmelites, where the Mercedarians are now living. It was in this house that the chaplains of the galleys lived with us for a year or so. As soon as that house in the small town was bought, the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission went there to live and constructed the present buildings to house the chaplains wishing to retire there. They are now able to do so, since the Intendant for the Galleys increased their wages by two écus a month at the beginning of 1666, and the same Intendant led them to hope for a better stipend in the future, provided they perform their duty well."

Document 103. - *Recueil Cangé, Règlements et Ordonnances militaires*, vol. XXVIII, fol. 14 (Bibl. Nat., f. fr. 4182, vol. XV, 45, fol. 52).

they do not have a guarantee of safety from His Majesty, it will be impossible for them to continue this charitable work so important both for the glory of God and the relief of the subjects of His Majesty.

Desiring to do all in his power to contribute to this, His Majesty, on the advice of his mother the Queen Regent, expressly forbids the Governors and his Lieutenants-General in his provinces and armies, Marshals and camp Majors, Colonels, Captains, and other leaders and officers commanding both his cavalry and infantry troops, French and foreigners—no matter what their nationality—to house any soldiers or allow them to be housed in the villages on the borders of Picardy and Champagne. The Priests of the Mission will ask them for a safe-conduct to help the poor and the sick, and to distribute the provisions they will take there, so that they will have full and entire liberty to practice charity there in the way and to whomever they think fit.

His Majesty also forbids all soldiers to take anything from the Priests of the Mission and from persons working with or for them, under pain of death, placing them under his protection and special safeguard. He enjoins very expressly all bailiffs, seneschals, judges, Provosts of Merchants, and other officers concerned, to see to the implementation and publication of the present letter and to prosecute offenders in such a way that the punishment will serve as an example.

His Majesty wills that credence be given to the duly verified copies of the present letter as to the original.

Given in Paris on February 14, 1651.

104. - MINUTES OF THE ASSEMBLY AT SAINT-LAZARE

(August 11, 1651)

We, Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, having endeavored for several years to put our Rules in

the best state possible, and desiring in short to put the final touches to them, have convoked some Superiors of our houses and other men well-versed in the affairs of our Institute in order to seek their advice on the Rules as well as on some other points important to our Congregation. These men are Messieurs René Alméras, Superior of the Rome house; Étienne Blatiron,¹ Superior of the Genoa house; Lambert aux Couteaux, Superior of the Richelieu house; Antoine Lucas, Superior of the Le Mans house; Gilbert Cuissot, Superior of the Cahors house; Louis Thibault,² Superior of the Saint-Méen house in the Saint-Malo diocese; François Grimal, Superior of the Agen house; Jean-Baptiste Le Gros,³ Superior of the house known as the Petit Saint-Lazare;⁴ and Antoine Portail, Jean Bécu, Jean Dehorgny, Pierre du Chesne, and Jean-Baptiste Gilles,⁵ all priests of our Congregation. With them we began, on July 1 of this year 1651, to discuss our Rules and other points mentioned above, which we have desired to draw up here in writing, along with the resolutions taken on them, to be signed below by us and by the aforementioned persons.

The first topic concerned the difficulty encountered in the practice of our vows, which the entire assembly agreed should be preserved. And in order to make this more authentic, it was decided to seek the approval of His Holiness without delay.

The second proposal was to study whether it was advisable to rule on a time limit among us for having the men give missions—such as fifty or sixty years of age—after which they would be released entirely from giving the missions in order to work at running the seminaries and other duties in the house.

The whole assembly agreed that nothing should be given as a ruling on this topic, but everything should be left to the discretion of the Superior General. For several reasons, the same assembly also agreed not to put the young priests to work right away in the functions of the mission.

¹Étienne Blatiron (cf. VII, 18, n. 9).

²Louis Thibault (cf. V, 109, n. 3).

³Jean-Baptiste Le Gros (cf. V, 75, n. 2).

⁴Saint-Charles Seminary (cf. VII, 28, n. 9).

⁵Jean-Baptiste Gilles (cf. IV, 279, n. 1).

The third proposal was to study whether it was advisable to have in each province of the Congregation two or three priests zealous for the salvation of souls and the work of the missions, who might work full time in them without settling in any house of the Congregation, not even during the usual intervals between the missions and the grape harvests, unless it is for eight to ten days, when they would go to the place where the Provincial or the Superior General resides to make their retreat and to give an account of their work.

It was thought that those God inspired to do this should not be refused, provided they had the requisite dispositions of body and mind that such work demands.

The fourth topic concerned the Rule regarding the election of the General, which states that he will present in writing to the assembly the names of two men whom he judges most suitable to succeed him; or whether it would be better for him not to designate anyone.

The assembly agreed to proceed in the way the Rule states, unless in the future this is found to have too many disadvantages.

The fifth proposal was whether the priests of the Tuesday Conferences should have closer ties to our Congregation.

The assembly did not agree to this but felt that we should go back to the original practice of inviting them, as well as diocesan seminarians, to come on mission with us—a practice that seems to have been stopped for some time—provided a judicious choice be made from among the above-mentioned persons.

The seventh [sic] concerned the firmness the Company must have in the sacrament of Penance regarding restitution, and not to give absolution until the penitents have made restitution either actually or by promise and obligation, and in writing.

The general opinion was that it was strongly advisable to act in this way.

The eighth was whether to continue in all the missions the practice of preaching in the morning, teaching catechism in the afternoon, and the major catechism in the evening.

The general opinion was that, except for very large missions, it would be advisable to suppress the afternoon catechism, which could be done in the evening or on its own, including in it some little moral lessons, or to do it for about fifteen minutes before the major catechism, without going into the pulpit, and for this purpose the major catechist should speak no longer than a good half-hour.

The ninth concerned the length of sermons.

The entire assembly agreed that three-quarters of an hour usually suffices, that an hour was too long, and that Superiors should see that this is observed exactly.

The tenth was to see if we should do what was decided in the last Assembly, on October 20, 1642, page 10,⁶ concerning the vows not to seek any office in the Congregation, nor to aspire to any benefice or office outside.

The assembly agreed that what is stated in the article should be observed, not however, with regard to all the individual members of the Congregation, but only those whom the Superior General judges capable, and provided they are priests and have made the second seminary. The Superior General can, nevertheless, admit them to them [vows] before the second seminary, provided they have completed the first seminary at least four years previously. He can also delay as long as he thinks fit those who have made the second seminary, if he does not feel that they are properly disposed for them.

The eleventh was whether we should be more gentle in our conduct toward our Brothers.

It was agreed that it is best to use a gentle tone of voice, accompanied by firmness, to help them carry out their duty, and it was decided that they would not be given the black habit so easily but that this should always be after asking permission of the Superior General.

The twelfth was whether some penances should be determined for certain particular faults.

The assembly said yes to this, and something was put down on a separate sheet of paper, but has not yet been settled.

Thirteenth, in one or three sessions thought was given to the means of keeping and perfecting the Congregation in ever greater charity and union; these means were also put down on a separate sheet of paper.

The rest of the time until August 11 of the same year was spent endeavoring to put the Rules in the best possible order, and an Act was even drawn up by which all acknowledge that they [the Rules] are as stated above and that they want them to be presented to the Archbishop of Paris⁷ for his approval. And everyone signed the Act.

⁶Cf. Doc. 89.

⁷Jean-François de Gondy.

Drawn up at Saint-Lazare, August 11, 1651.

VINCENT DEPAUL	PORTAIL
FRANÇOIS GRIMAL	LOUIS THIBAUT
LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX	GILBERT CUISSOT
PIERRE DU CHESNE	A. LUCAS
JEAN DEHORGNY	ÉTIENNE BLATIRON
J.-B. GILLES	J. BÉCU

*Proposals submitted to M. Vincent, Superior General, made at the Assembly held in Paris in August 1651 for the good government of the Congregation, especially of the Saint-Lazare house, along with his replies.*⁸

(1) It would seem that a Director of Scholastics should be appointed to form them in piety, interior communication, and better study habits; he would also instruct them in the method of preaching and in practical catechetics.

The Sub-assistant will take care of this, if the Assistant is unable to do it.

(2) It would seem more convenient to postpone the Solemn High Mass on Sundays and feast days until eight o'clock, rather than to celebrate it without a break after the Little Hours.

We will try it for a while.

(3) Some time should be designated for the examination of the seminarians by the Superior and his Assistants, in the presence of their Director, and likewise to observe the progress of the scholastics in their studies and conduct, to approve those who have advanced, and to have those less capable of higher studies apply themselves to other subjects; others may be dismissed from the Congregation, if that should be found helpful.

The Assistant will see to it that these three articles are put into practice as soon as possible.

(4) Since it would be inadvisable for the scholastics to become too familiar and to associate too closely with the older members of the Congregation, perhaps the usefulness of having the older priests share their daily conversations should be discussed.

There are many disadvantages in separating the young from the older men. We who are older should give ourselves to God to be an example to the young. Still, we will try this separation: the senior

⁸The proposals, written in italics, are in Latin in the original; the Saint's replies are in French in the original.

men will have their own discussions, headed by someone who will propose the topics of conversation.

(5) *Perhaps it would be better for the spiritual progress of the seminarians, scholastics, and Brothers if the original method of preaching be reintroduced—when, that is, subjects better adapted to them are treated in the presence of their Director alone, within the confines of the seminary, and from a pulpit lower than the one we have now, instead of choosing persons to preach in a very large hall from a high pulpit.*

I think it will be a good idea to do it in the way mentioned in this fifth article regarding the method of preaching.

(6) *It would seem that greater care should be taken in fulfilling the obligations assumed by the Congregation, especially concerning the foundations of M. Vivien,⁹ M. Callon,¹⁰ and certain others; we do not seem to be grateful enough to our benefactors.*

It is absolutely necessary to fulfill these foundations and to show greater gratitude toward our benefactors.

(7) *It seems that, as a sign of gratitude toward these illustrious men, the Congregation should place a plaque of the late Prior in the hall of Saint-Lazare and that some epitaph be erected in the church to his memory.*

I ask M. Portail to give orders that this article and the others be implemented.

(8) *It seems that someone should be appointed weekly to say daily Mass for our founders and benefactors.*

I ask him to do the same regarding the Mass for the benefactors.

(9) *When someone has undertaken a work but is sent elsewhere because of some need, without completing the work, it would seem proper for him to explain that work in writing so someone else could do it. Because of this failure, many good projects perish.*

The observance of this article is to be put into practice.

(10) *Spiritual conferences held in the evening are likely to be of less value; they would be more profitable at some other time.*

At Saint-Lazare it is very difficult to find a time on Friday, except after night prayers, when the whole community can assemble for the conference; it is easier in other houses. The local Superiors can try to hold it immediately after Vespers on Friday.

⁹On January 20, 1632, Nicolas Vivien, Councillor of the King and Master of Accounts, had given ten thousand livres to fund missions in the jurisdictions of the Parlements of Toulouse, Bordeaux, or Provence. (Cf. Arch. Nat., MM 538, fol. 292v.) On July 5, 1636, he added a yearly income of two hundred livres *tournois*. (Cf. Arch. Nat., Y 176, fol. 383v.)

¹⁰Louis Callon (cf. V, 233, n. 3).

105. - ACCOUNT OF THE ASSEMBLY AT SAINT-LAZARE [1651]

Present were M. Vincent, Superior General; M. Portail, Assistant of Saint-Lazare; M. Dehorgny, Superior; M. Bécu, Procurator of Saint-Lazare; M. Lambert, Superior of Richelieu; M. Lucas; M. du Chesne; M. Thibault; M. Cuissot; M. Alméras; M. Blatiron; M. Grimal; M. Le Gros; M. Gilles.

*On the eve of the feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary,*¹ after invoking the Holy Spirit by the *Veni Creator*, and when all had taken their places at random with no regard for persons or rank, M. Vincent the Superior General, seated near the fireplace, opened the Assembly with a short address on the subject of the Assembly. He noted, first of all, that there are—or can be—three types of Assemblies: (1) the General Assembly for the election of the Superior General, in conformity with the conventions prescribed for the election of a General; (2) the Triennial Assembly of the Visitors and some members of their provinces, to take stock of the needs of the Company or of the general or particular needs of a certain province where the Visitor has not remedied something, or to take steps to attend to the infractions of a General who might go wrong; and (3) the Extraordinary Assembly, called by the Superior General to reflect on certain needs of the Company, for which he might need to receive fuller information and help from the Company. This latter one is composed of persons chosen by the Superior General, whom he finds suited to what he has in mind.

Several reasons have prevented holding a General Assembly, which will take place, if Our Lord is pleased to give it life. This one is of the third type, to find a solution to difficulties that have arisen concerning the practice of our vows, to review our Rules, and a few other problems that have arisen.

Having said that, he proposed two things: (1) the reasons we have to give ourselves to God to treat properly what has to be treated in this Assembly, and (2) the means to do so.

Document 105. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original manuscript of Antoine Lucas. This account, written without too much attention to detail, contains many unclear passages. The texts in italics are written in Latin in the original.

¹July 1. This feast, formerly celebrated on July 2, is now celebrated on May 31.

(1) *The reasons.* The consolidation of the Company is the work of Our Lord. He strongly emphasized this reason.

We have to discuss there the above-mentioned topics: the practice of the vows and the difficulties that have arisen in this regard, etc.

The means. Prayer. The Apostles, Our Lord, and the Church recommended private and public prayer for their undertakings. Place all our trust in God and in God's help. Make no concessions to nature nor expect anything from it; put on Jesus Christ and His sentiments. Disregard our inclinations and passions. Do not interrupt others. Value the opinions of others more than our own. Do not propose anything, but leave that to the Superior and, if there is something, propose it to him in private. Do not speak either to members of the Assembly or to others about what is said there. Respect confidentiality—he strongly insisted on this.

He next proposed that the vows be discussed: whether the practice of the vows should be continued in the way that has been done since the last Assembly [of 1641] until now, or whether to abandon them entirely; whether what is offensive to some people will be changed, such as reserving dispensation from them to the Pope and the Superior General; and, if they are to be preserved, the means of making them.

After dinner, around two o'clock, the Assembly began with the *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*, everyone seated as in the morning. M. Vincent proposed the topic for this session, namely, the vows and how they should be practiced in the Company.

(1) To see whether the Company should preserve the practice of its vows.

Reasons in favor: (1) Because, says Fr. de Condren, General of the Oratory,² Our Lord took them, although Saint Thomas is of the opposite opinion, *as God*, says this saint;³ but Fr. de Condren says that He made them as man: *I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the sight of those who fear him.*⁴

²Charles de Condren (cf. II, 346, n. 3).

³Cf. *Summa Theologica* 2-2, q. LXXXVIII, art. IV, ad. 3.

⁴Cf. Ps 22:26. (NAB)

This is a holy action in use for a long time in the Church and in the synagogue. *Take your vows and fulfill them to the Lord*, etc.⁵ It is a holocaust very pleasing to God, in which the fruit and the tree are offered; and thus the whole person is consecrated to God. Actions are more meritorious with them; subjects, who by nature are like what is written on sand and on water, are strengthened. A solid foundation of prayer is needed, for *a person never remains in the same state*. The Company is more perfect with them; a better disposition is made of its subjects. Here he remarked that two priests in a Company that was not bound by vows came for an explanation of the needs of the border areas. They were planning to go there to work, but when they heard of the misfortunes and the need of the people and the region, they changed their minds. Two Capuchin Fathers he requested of the Provincial and the Guardian, who had promised to go, did nothing about it. A Superior would not be able to dispose of his men so freely, and they would more easily resist when they might have to go to difficult ministries in far off places, etc.

(2) *Reasons against*: Several Companies without vows are flourishing and doing much good, such as the Oratory of Rome and of France,⁶ Saint-Nicolas, Saint-Sulpice,⁷ etc. The difficulty people find with them within and outside. It seems that a person could live on with greater freedom, and therefore with greater merit. *He could have transgressed and did not*, etc.⁸ This will not make good men any less steadfast; we will be more in line with the clergy, of which we are members and a part; secular priests will have greater confidence in us and feel freer with us; Bishops will have no reason for taking umbrage, and all difficulties will disappear.

(3) If the vows are to be retained, it seems that anything offensive should be removed, namely, reserving dispensation from them to the Pope and the General, and the rights of the Bishops should be

⁵Cf. Ps 50:14. (NAB)

⁶The Oratory of Rome, founded by Saint Philip Neri, and the Oratory of France, founded by Cardinal Pierre de Bérulle.

⁷Community of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet Seminary (the Nicolaites), founded by Adrien Bourdoise, and the Community of Saint-Sulpice, founded by Jean-Jacques Olier.

⁸Cf. Sir 31:10. (NAB)

left alone, although it seems that the Archbishop of Paris might have done what he did as representative of the Pope in this matter. That is the opinion of his council and of some Doctors. Meanwhile, send someone to Rome expressly to petition for this affair in person and to do nothing else, because the late Commander de Sillery⁹ used to say that, with time and patience, everything could be settled in Rome; and M. de Molé, Chief Justice of the Court, says that he has never seen a good affair fail in the Parlement. Those difficulties will cease with time because this decision was made after praying much and seeking advice. Clement VIII¹⁰ had dreamed that God was damning him because he had received Henry IV¹¹ after asking the advice of several Doctors. Tolet,¹² on his return, said to him: "That is a temptation, for you did it after much prayer and with good advice." And he himself was cured of a difficulty by the late M. Pillé when he had to plead the case of Saint-Lazare, because he said: "Do not go to any trouble without seeking advice and praying a great deal."

Sunday, July 2. M. Vincent repeated the reasons for uncertainty regarding our vows: that the Pope refused them, saying *We shall see*; that the Doctors do not agree with one another regarding their value; that several men in the Company have difficulty with them.

M. Grimal stated that we should hold fast in favor of the vows and tend toward solemn ones rather than abandon them, because therein is the consolidation of the Company.

M. Thibault said the same but remarked that the Bishop of Tréguier¹³ had some difficulties with this.

M. Blatiron noted that moderation should be used with regard to the Italians, who have a problem with vows and the religious state, which they think consists in the vows; and if that could be separated, we could accept those who would take vows and those who

⁹Noël Brulart de Sillery (cf. V, 558, n. 5).

¹⁰Pope Clement VIII (1592-1605).

¹¹Henry IV, King of France (1589-1610).

¹²Francisco Cardinal Toledo (Tolet), S.J. (cf. V, 317, n. 6).

¹³Balthazar Grangier de Liverdi.

would not, like the Jesuits, some of whom take the four vows, and others do not; nevertheless, the vows must not be eliminated.

M. Gilles defended the vows and pointed out that (1) the Company could not exist without vows; (2) it would be desirable not to be able to inherit, or there could be an attorney for inheritances, and individual members would not get involved in them *because they offer scrawny sheep and carry off the plump ones*; the condition of the Mission would be worse than that of an assistant; the Bishops are delighted to have Missionaries *because they belong to the clergy and are well versed in clerical matters*; as long as we have property, or the hope of having some, we look back, like Lot's wife; if there were only the missions, it would not be necessary to take vows *because it would be a very wretched situation for the senior confreres*, who like a fixed state; and the instability of the Mission is very hard to bear *because human beings, like trees, put down roots*. The Bishops have no reason to complain because they have stable servants. He stressed that, even if he had to live on bread and water, he would not leave the Mission. He added that our vows *do not bind in the external forum but do so in the internal forum*; that everyone should be obliged to take vows at the end of two years; the older men should not be pressured to renew them, *provided they do not speak badly of them; but, if they do, let them be bound by them or punished*. (2) [sic] When someone speaks badly of them, remedy this immediately by withdrawing him from the house where he can do harm, as in a small house, and by keeping watch over him in a large one, etc.; do not admit those who are unwilling to take vows, unless it is in Italy, because of the difficulty that people there have with our vows.

M. Dehorgny spoke in favor of simple vows, but not in favor of the reservations because the person who drew up our Bull in Rome told him that the Pope never intended to give that authority to the Archbishop of Paris. Those vows put the Company in a higher state, and that is not a simple Rule, and that, when particular law is uncertain within the general law, the Superior is not authorized to grant this particular right, unless he expresses it; he also agreed that we should send someone to Rome for that, as has been proposed.

M. Portail agreed that the reservation should be eliminated and that a man who will get things moving should be sent to Rome, etc.

Monday the third. M. Alméras said that it [the reservation] should be eliminated in the usual way. (1) They are null and void. Urban and Innocent¹⁴ refused them. Nevertheless, M. Vincent remarked that he had instructed the late M. Lebreton to ask Urban for the vows of religion, not as we make them, and Bishop Ingoli wanted to unite us to the Congregation of Propaganda Fide, but that would have broken off relations with the Prelates. This is a big problem for the Company, and the Doctors hold that they are null and void *because [a privilege] granted in a particular case is not deemed to be admitted in a general concession, as in our case. They do not come under a general concession. . . .*

He is very uncertain about whether we should take them. They offend persons within and outside; they prevent people from coming; they are the path to our becoming religious; they will be of some use; besides, a dispensation will easily be obtained by a special Bull, as with the Jesuits, although no matter what they do they do not succeed and have become apostate [religious].

But the ministries are difficult. —We will not stop working in them if we do not have vows, nor will we refuse them any less because of the vows, like the Capuchins, who found no one to go to Picardy. The Superior will have them obey him in this as in other things, and his firmness will serve as a vow; otherwise, that is mistrusting God.

That means making a change. —Sometimes this is good, and M. Vincent himself demonstrated this with regard to ceremonies, showing that God Himself changed.

It is more perfect. —So then, we have to become religious. Great difficulty in Rome.

M. du Chesne was of the same opinion, saying that the vows were uncertain, to say the least. *In doubtful matters [of law], the interpretation more favorable to the subject is to be followed.* If they have to be eliminated, this can be discussed in three ways: either to

¹⁴Popes Urban VIII (1632-44) and Innocent X (1644-55).

take them as is done at present, or have the entire Company take simple ones, or receive them only from those who ask for them. In the first two cases the Pope has to pronounce because it must be universal law, and both cases experience almost the same difficulties. It is even doubtful if they should be taken because [1] they go against our purpose; they are constitutive of a religious Order; among the Jesuits they experience many difficulties and have little success, since few people are restrained by vows; and if that is the only thing that restrains them, it is better that they leave. The third case should be retained but without having to go to the Pope. Nevertheless, if people want one of the first two that are mentioned above, we must send to Rome about it, etc.

M. Lambert felt that the form of the vows should be changed because we do not know how to explain them, or we should even eliminate them altogether because that goes against the purpose of the Company. The vow of poverty may be incompatible with having a title, the right of inheritance, etc.; we do not know how to explain this, etc.; nevertheless, a vow of obedience to the Superior General would be necessary, etc.

M. Bécu declared that he would accept any kind of vow, provided it not make us religious.

M. Cuissot is against vows; he thinks, nevertheless, that there must be some bond in the Company.

M. Le Gros remarked that vows are necessary, but gave no explanation.

M. Vincent stated that much prayer is needed, that it is a question of knowing God's Will for the peace and consolidation of the Company. It is also question of doing away with a great part of the reason for divisions, and he said that we would continue to discuss this topic until greater agreement is reached.

Tuesday the fourth. M. Vincent stated that he felt obliged to clarify this matter to the Company. He had two things read: one from the Bull *Ascendente Domino*, which I had quoted: *We have laid down in specific form*; that it was part of Church law *in an approved Order*; that vows must be taken in an approved religious Order. He stressed that, in the Lyons and the Lateran Councils *under Innocent*

III,¹⁵ it is forbidden under pain of nullity to create any new religious Order that does not follow one of the four Rules of the time. Now, the Popes and the Council of Trent¹⁶ made an exception for the Jesuits. The rest of us, etc. (2) They say there is no pressure. *He explained it by the analogy of a wife or a gathering of widows*, having heard that they were forcing, etc. It is dangerous to back down in that way; once a law is established it is not easily revoked. We cannot please everyone. (Comparison of Clement VIII and of that man with his son and his donkey, etc.) Lastly, after one hour of discussion, he proposed that they see whether the Company should be bound to maintain its vows once the reservation is removed.

M. Bécu does not think so because they tend toward a religious Order, etc.

M. Grimal is in favor of them because of the bond.

M. Cuissot has a problem with them.

M. Blatiron is against them because they will make us out to be religious, especially in Italy, where we will not be well accepted with our vows. Priests will collaborate less easily with us, especially in Italy. We are helpers of the Bishops, who will be upset with us and will choose instead more learned religious like the Jesuits, etc. There is as much advantage in not taking them; *and this is obvious to anyone who considers the point*; we can be strengthened by admitting to vows those who will ask to take them and by obtaining that a dispensation may be given only by the Holy See; that will be easier.

M. Thibault is against vows, as above.

M. Gilles supports [the vows for] many [reasons]: (1) It is not good to make a change after a decision is taken in a General Assembly, *even in a single case*. What then, did not the Holy Spirit preside over it? Where will the Spirit preside? Great difficulty with such change. It was the vows that kept him when he had a twenty-five-year-old Superior, etc. Doubt will also be cast on the

¹⁵Pope Innocent III (1198-1216); the Fourth Lateran Council was held in 1215. Innocent IV (1243-54) was Pontiff at the time of the First Council of Lyons (1245).

¹⁶Council of Trent (1545-63). During that period four Popes sat on the papal throne: Paul III (1534-49), Julius III (1550-55), Paul IV (1555-59), and Pius IV (1559-63).

first Assembly. This would be to do harm to the Company or to put it at risk because "*every change*," says Aristotle, "*is a disease*"; it is going from intense heat to bitter cold, etc. One day a statesman said to him: "It is easy for one to change his state." "Yes," he said to himself, "but he will die five times beforehand." One day a man who belonged to the Oratory said to him: "The Oratory is just a respectable inn"; its seminary is not much, etc. What a difference from the Jesuits! (1) Their vows are *in an approved Order*, as is evident from the Bull *Ascendente*; when they are coadjutor [Brothers], they cannot inherit; the fourth vow is solemn; the professed house can have nothing; they are exempt from the Ordinaries; those who leave are excommunicated and are considered apostate [religious]; they can enter only the Carthusians; they take several vows and oaths; their duties and habits are different. This is the thinking of the General. There is no one in the Company who is not ready to take them. His teacher, the late M. Mazure,¹⁷ told him that one must consider in everything whether there is more to be feared than to be hoped, and in that case it is folly to take them; whether there is as much to be feared as to be hoped, and that is imprudence; whether there is more to be hoped than to be feared, and that is prudence. The Italians? The mother has to lead the daughter and not the other way around. For to follow a Doctor is not sure in conscience, as what Navarre¹⁸ says about the commandments of the Church not obliging under pain of sin, or about the benefice holder who does not pray his office having the right to its fruits; he read in the works of the theologians of Coimbra that there is no opinion so foolish that it has not been upheld by some lawyer . . . *powerful in lips* [a powerful speaker]; that he would ask to leave rather than to give up the vows; that he does not think it necessary to come to a decision on this question; that a Catalan gentleman with whom he was in Cahors was ready to jump on him for having stated that religious are not so well thought of because they behave badly; so we should not reach the point here of advising a young man to become a bad monk

¹⁷Nicolas Mazure, Canon of Coutances (cf. I, 376, n. 4).

¹⁸Martín Navarro, a Spanish canonist.

rather than a soldier, that many good acts are performed in religious Orders, but none in war, etc.

M. Le Gros regards the Company as a building whose Rules and vows are the foundation; neither one nor the other must be removed.

M. Dehorgny says that, since our vows are not good, we should contact Rome as soon as possible and go along peacefully in the meantime.

M. Portail agrees with this.

M. Alméras also agrees.

And so do I.

And M. Lambert says that the vows seem good to him but we should send someone to Rome. He reported what the Bishop of Tréguier said to him: "If all Companies or the Mission were to disappear, it would be [better] to let the other things go, etc."

M. Vincent speaks strongly in favor of the vows, saying that he thinks Our Lord wills us to make them; he will send a man to Rome as soon as possible to do only that, etc.

Thursday the sixth. The question was raised as to whether a time will be fixed to go on the missions and another to rest, or whether there will be permanent missionaries who would not move from the mission. Note that he had thought that the Superior General should not be chosen from among the latter men. —Reasons against: that cannot be easily decided. We . . . the missions only as the advancement of. . .¹⁹ We give up the most important thing in the Company. The Jesuits have not fixed the time of the professed house. —Reasons in favor: a man cannot always work. That will be a consolation for the Company.

M. Bécu says yes for the first; the second is difficult because of the vacation period.

M. Gilles thinks that both are good.

M. Cuissot agrees because we are doing the first; the second is similar.

M. Blatiron agrees and is open to it.

¹⁹The word here is illegible.

M. Thibault thinks that the first is good; so is the second, except that they would have to come back during vacation time when people seek relaxation. They receive comfort from the Company. This can create some inconvenience. Superiors should be zealous for the missions and see to it that everyone goes to them.

M. Gilles says that there should be a set time for teaching for the missions; nevertheless, he thinks this is difficult. Be concerned about those who are working; follow the inclinations, etc. He finds the proposal of a permanent mission a difficult thing because nature might not provide for it; they would have to preach with no preparation; the spirit of interiority might be lost; our men would become worn out in a short time.

M. Dehorgny feels the same way. No ruling should be made on anything, but much consideration should be given both to the elderly and to the young. The other does not seem feasible to him.

M. Portail agrees.

M. Alméras says that consideration should be given to the elderly and to the young; although the other suggestion is difficult, it is not impossible and should be tried.

M. du Chesne thinks that both are easy but no ruling should be made about anything; regarding the latter one: *because of the state of their vocation some would hold that we should place our hope in the mercy of God; there are some who volunteer.*

M. Lambert suggests a house in each province for future Missionaries, without retreatants, etc.

Discussion on both proposals was concluded without making any ruling or prescribing a set time for missions; it was agreed that help should be given those who want to go on mission, providing them with furniture, beds, linen, dishes, etc., a Brother cook, etc.

The following day. It was suggested that they be concise in their deliberations. (1) *That is how it is in Councils*, in which thirty to forty important business matters are settled; each gives his opinion and two reasons briefly. There are two ways of knowing the truth: (1) By a simple elevation to God; (2) By reasoning. Two or three reasons are given on the nature of the matter; others cause confusion. There should be two or three lawyers to consult on an affair;

any more would confuse matters; that is how it is for physicians. The King's chief physician; [the King] puts himself in the hands of just one physician. Among his resolutions M. de Bérulle had: "I will make decisions on affairs by elevation to God." Much time is lost. There are dangerous consequences and bad results. This is imposing one's own opinion and way of thinking.

See whether one is permitted to cut a person short and interrupt the one who is speaking.

Everyone says yes, etc.

The question was proposed as to whether the election of the General made on the proposal of two persons by the preceding General [should be maintained]. This is what the Sisters of Sainte-Marie²⁰ do. No one knows the Company better; there is nothing to fear in doing it as the Rule states. —Reasons against: the Jesuits do not do that; they have always had great men. This is from M. Vincent: "Wretch that I am," he said, "I was afraid."

Almérás also says yes *because that is what has been laid down*. He sees, nevertheless, three difficulties: that the Company seems bound; that the General can become mentally confused, like Vitelleschi,²¹ who let himself be governed by his assistant. This is a concern, or, if refused, will encourage vanity. We will vote on them if they reject them, or . . . to correct that Rule after the death of the one who abuses it.

Saturday the eighth. See whether a distinction will be made of degrees in the Company. —Reasons in favor of this: because the Jesuits do it or did it very appropriately in order to become Superiors; there will be competition; naming a poor Superior will not be so simple. —Opposed: it is not easy; envy is to be feared; we did not begin that way; it is difficult to see how to make a distinction.

²⁰Visitation nuns.

²¹Mutius Vitelleschi, sixth General of the Society of Jesus (1615-45). Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886) and H. Boehmer, noted historians of a later date, were, like Almérás, critical of Vitelleschi's mild rule, fostering a growing bureaucracy of Roman professors. (Cf. *Catholic Encyclopedia* [New York: McGraw Hill, 1967], vol. 14, pp. 725-26.)

It was rejected. Nothing about degrees, but a list will be made of the most virtuous and learned men, which the Superior General will keep and will choose the Superiors from among them.

The same day. See whether the members of the Conference²² should have closer ties than they do at present. —The reply is *no*, because there seems to be no reason for it.

See whether they should be invited to work on the missions. —Reasons in favor: they have already begun to do so, and the work of missions began with them; God is granting them the grace for it; men are formed by it; many people will be served; they keep us in check. —Reasons against: we find this difficult; they may see our weakness; they may be scandalized and have little regard for us; it is no longer like it was in the beginning.

We must abide by this, etc. Better to dismiss members of the Company who have difficulty with it. Observe, nevertheless, that they must not be given any posts as Superiors; and that our men may be fewer than they are; one or two of our men; choose some of our men and some of those who participate in the Conference.

It was agreed to send our men who might be disposed to go there in place of the Pastors, and to take them on mission . . . to Vaucresson.²³

See whether restitution before absolution will be obligatory. —M. Blatiron says that this happens in Genoa; if it is a public matter, the person should be made to pay immediately or to give his word to do so; if the matter is confidential, *even with inconvenience*, they said it should be handed over to the Pastor, who will find a solution for it (*This is difficult*). Enough of that! It can be either an upright man or their Pastor the first time. *This did not please everyone because* the mission is special. Fr. Eudes²⁴ does it this way and finds it helpful. It was also proposed that the principal cases requiring restitution be indicated. Keep them in mind when giving a penance; say that he says such and such, but we think it better to recall, etc.

²²The Tuesday Conferences

²³In Hauts-de-Seine, northeast of Versailles.

²⁴Saint John Eudes (cf. VIII, 366, n. 1).

M. Gilles gives absolution in private and says he has never given it publicly. —Rejected by everyone *because a judge should pass sentence honestly in the presence and with the awareness of the accused*. This is duplicity in the sacraments, and the form of the sacrament must be perceptible.

Monday the tenth. One of the things to be observed in giving missions together with outsiders is to choose the men carefully—even our own men. As a general rule, there should be only one or two of our men. They should come to the conference and repetition of prayer.²⁵ They should be housed together. The Director should know how strong they are both spiritually and physically.

Consideration was given as to whether we should continue to hold the conference on days of relaxation. —Each was instructed to voice his difficulties and his reasons in favor of this. In summer, the best time to take a walk is four o'clock in the afternoon. It is difficult to subject the members of the Company and priests from the outside to it. It should be held at two o'clock or at eight o'clock in the evening. They are not together in the morning, and they have to be in church on Sundays.

It was suggested that we see whether punishments for ordinary faults and simple ones should be regulated. —That is what God did in the Old Testament, and the Church does in the Canons and legislation. The Visitation nuns, also. It moderates those Superiors who are either too irascible and testy or too meek. —Reasons against: it is not the custom of the Jesuits; three things can make up for these things: punishment, warnings, and having one kneel during repetition of prayer.

It was decided that a distinction would be made among them, and Messieurs du Chesne, Thibault, and Blatiron should be delegated to work on that after dinner and the following day.

Next, M. Vincent asked M. Blatiron how he spent his time on the missions. —His reply: 7½ hours sleep; ½ hour of prayer, not including reading and the litany; Office together; confessions; recreation; cases of conscience; certificates for confession are given to persons

²⁵Repetition of prayer (cf. VIII, 572, n. 28).

who have been properly instructed. Conference is held for ½ hour on the day after the day off, or on Sundays and feast days, etc.

Wednesday the twelfth. Does one sermon suffice? —The answer is yes, after a fashion, divided into catechism class and a sermon.

Are both the sermon and catechism necessary? —The answer is yes.

Should the noon catechism be eliminated? —Yes, we have already begun to do so. Very few men come to it; we make up for it by the morning and evening catechism class. Do not divide the evening activities into catechism and preaching. People get too tired; they forget; we have only children in front of us and they cause a disturbance. The conclusion was to try, nevertheless, to do both until the next Assembly.

Should sermons be allowed to go beyond forty-five minutes or an hour? —No, a penance should be imposed if they do. They have to want this, pray for it, deprive them of preaching and of wine, etc. Put that among the faults.

Thursday the thirteenth. It was [resolved] with regard to the vows not to seek any office or benefice. —Response: They have to be made as soon as possible, and the Company is open to this. Admit those who will participate in Provincial Assemblies and will be Superiors General and Visitors. It was decided to work on the Rules concerning *Provincial Assemblies*, where everything has to be corrected.

The same day, work was done on the causes of a lack of charity and the means to obtain it.

Causes of disunion. M. Vincent lists: nature, which involves both likes and dislikes if we follow it; a desire for possessions, honors, and pleasure; a spirit of stubborn contradiction; offending one another by rash judgment; talebearing and malicious gossip through unkind judgments; failing in the duties of charity; excessive self-love; discussing the faults of others, especially their abilities; refraining from defending oneself for not contributing enough to the conversation; lack of respect; envy; arrogance; being too reserved; poor leadership in certain Superiors; being disagreeable; mixing persons strong in their vocation with others; lack of unifor-

mity; too few General Assemblies (nevertheless, the Jesuits say that *they should take place only rarely*, etc.); poor communication among the houses; manifesting little regard for what others say or do; haughtiness; lack of mortification; failure to be compassionate.

Remedies. Keep these causes before our eyes and detest them; have a lowly opinion of oneself; great openness of heart; do penance for gossip and report it to the Superior; hold frequent conferences on this subject; dismiss unsuitable persons; Superiors should enforce the observance of this; have communication often; *bear in mind* respect for others; love of our own abjection; accept the suggestions and sentiments of others; speak well of the absent; tell those who are admitted that they should not be haughty; build compatible communities, avoiding antipathies; mutual support and graciousness; humility and mortification; mistrust of self in our duties; let everyone know that disunity is not tolerated, and go so far as to dismiss persons who create it; share with the houses the means of being united; have a spirit of creating unity; confidentiality and discretion in speech; love of God; do to others only what we would wish to be done to ourselves; ask God for a unifying spirit; do not mock others, and warn those who do; animate conversations and instill this in others.

After dinner on the fourteenth. Should we direct the Daughters of Charity? —This is a work of God and of the Company, which does much good and which we cannot easily set aside, etc. As a rule, no; in extraordinary cases, yes.

M. Alm  ras.—Yes, in the parlor at a set time; they should be kept at a distance, and someone else should always be there.

Saturday the fifteenth. The question proposed was whether there was any problem with the Rule concerning the property of individual members. —The answer was yes (1) with regard to repairs; (2) for families with children who are minors; (3) for titles confused with other property of relatives; (4) for receiving property through a proxy or from the one to whom it belongs; (5) if a man leaves, and there are arrears remaining, how to receive them; (6) the Parlements, families, and the public will have a problem with it.

Possible solutions. (1) The plan is to see how we can find a way of preserving the property of individual members without leaving the management of it to them, and still allowing the Company to profit from it without being responsible for paying something back, since it provides for the individual and it is only fair that the one who has the means should help to provide for his brothers. (2) Write down the plan with all its difficulties, propose it to some lawyers, counselors among our friends, and two Doctors who are experts in Community affairs.

The entire day was spent on this, without coming to any conclusion on the matter.

Among other remarkable things M. Vincent said is that he hopes that the Congregation will never initiate any lawsuit at court unless (1) the advice of lawyers has been sought, and the Congregation has asked them if it has a good case; and, if it is doubtful, it should be dropped; (2) everything possible has been done to settle the affair out of court, as he did for the business of M. Delattre.²⁶

Those who will enter the Congregation and will have simple benefices or pensions, as well as those who will actually have the use of their property, or which they will inherit after their entrance into the Congregation, will leave the management and use of the revenues of the benefices, pensions, and other above-mentioned properties to the Congregation. This will be done in such a way, however, that they will be free to dispose of their money according to the laws and customs of the place, without, however—should they happen to leave the Congregation—recovering the use and management of the revenues of the benefices and other property received and to be received by the Congregation up to the day of their departure.

The following was asked concerning this: (1) Can a particular Congregation established in the Church by authority of the Pope and of the King, having the power to make Rules and Constitutions, make this Rule and insert it into its Constitutions? And, in the event that it can do so:

(2) Under what terms will the Congregation be able to enjoy the use of the property mentioned therein and will it be unable to claim

²⁶Guillaume Delattre (cf. IV, 38, n. 2).

it either because of the departure of the one to whom it belongs, or because of his death, since he or his heirs are entitled to their rights?

(3) Who will have the right to give the receipts—the proprietor or the procurator of the house? Will it be necessary to sign a power of attorney for the receipts and to administer the property?

(4) How should we proceed to collect the inheritances of those to whom they are due from the time of their entrance into the Congregation: will they themselves see to this or should it be done by proxy, either from within or from outside the Congregation?

(5) What obligation will they have for the upkeep of the buildings and dependencies of the property, and will the repairs fall to the Congregation if the owner leaves the Congregation or dies?

(6) How can the arrears on them be recovered if the owner either leaves the Congregation or leaves this world by his death?

Sunday the sixteenth. A proposal was made to study the list of faults drawn up according the agreement of Monday, July 10, and see how to proceed with it, noting that, at their General Assembly, the Jesuits drew up a list of major faults and ordered them to be read annually in the refectory.

Debate took place regarding conversations with married and unmarried women, that the bedroom . . . allowing them to come into our house; whether to speak to them in church and in what way. How would this decision be made? There are three ways: *By invoking the Holy Spirit, many saints have thus been chosen; by a test with two beans, or by a card, or by one or two containers so placed that no one can see what choice is being made; or by an arbitrator; that is how . . . Greg[ory] chose this from John 21, to be selected by him, one ses[sion].*

Monday the seventeenth. —Concerning coadjutor [Brothers], how they should be governed, and their habit: Three ways of governing them: (1) With unreserved love and cordiality; they are servants of God and are our brothers. . . . (2) With great strictness. Proverbs are words of truth. *Oignez vilain.*²⁷ The Discalced Carmelites were well served when their Brothers were of the nobil-

²⁷*Oignez vilain* is the beginning of a French proverb: "Tender-handed stroke a nettle, And it stings you for your pains; Grasp it like a man of mettle, and it soft as silk remains."

ity. (3) A combination of both. That is how God governs. In Genoa, strictness is necessary. Some give cause for concern because they wear the black habit and are unwilling to do anything.

Several say that all three ways of governing are necessary; others, that there should be a combination; still others, with unreserved love; if they are incapable of this, they should be dismissed. *Observation: neither prayer, nor repetition, nor Conference should be in common; at table, especially on pilgrimages and journeys; if they are not in charge in a particular duty, they should not initiate anything without the authorization of the person responsible for the duty. There should not be too much involvement with them and no familiarity; their collar should be different, even if they wear black; priests and seminarians must neither be corrected nor praised in their presence; their travel expenses should be checked. Sometimes they grumble if they do not eat with us, and even quarrel. The Carthusians do not allow theirs to serve the priests, etc. They do not have enough . . . when traveling.*

The eighteenth. M. Vincent says that a mixed governance is necessary, but it must be assumed that Christian leadership implies and requires humility. *I did not come to be served, but to serve*, etc. There are no slaves among Christians except those who are sent to the galleys for their crimes. Gentle, amiable governance is the best in practice, and experience has proven this. They are our brothers, etc. Resolved therefore: do not change the habit, but do not give it easily and reserve the authority for doing so to the General; be firm in dismissing those who misuse it and who go back on their resolution; when they are in town or traveling, have them eat at table with us. He did so at Mme. d'Aiguillon's table; give them the same food and horses as we have—if not with slight differences—or send them on ahead. It is difficult to regulate expenses when they have to go to the country; do not give the priests servants when they are available. He has often thought about whether to invite them to repetition of prayer, but after they have spoken, *res indigesta*. Here many members insisted that we should fear making our weaknesses

apparent. (2) There are many things to be corrected in the Brothers, seminarians, and priests, etc.

After dinner. Should we retain the Rule that states that they will teach? Reasons in favor: this is what is being done; they have the aptitude; *Do not stifle the Spirit* (1Thes 5:19): they are successful at it; that consoles and encourages them. Reasons against: some abuse it; it has unpleasant consequences. It should be removed from their Rule and placed in the Rule for the Superior so that its practice will be preserved, and that it not be in their Rule.

Next, they discussed supervision of duties. Note that some want to act like absolute bosses in their duty and find it difficult to have someone supervise them. —It was decided never to put anyone but a priest in charge of the storeroom; as for shopping at the markets, some thought will be given to that, as also to introducing some professed.

Thursday, July 20. Discussion on a note that had been given to M. Vincent, asking what to reply to persons who might question us regarding our vows.

Answer: There are two sorts of persons: those who have no business asking; and they should be told that, yes, we make simple vows, etc.; and more serious persons; these should be given an answer. He then gave a long, intense discourse, saying that we made vows: (1) because that is what binds persons most perfectly to God; (2) binds the Company and its members, whereby it is no problem sending a man fifty leagues from here for a seminary or to go to the Indies, etc. They help us resemble Jesus Christ more closely, and to be more capable in our ministries. There is greater equality among us and more steadfastness in the members.

But you are depriving Bishops of their authority. —Answer: This can be done in two ways: either in relation to their authority, such as depriving them of the power to confirm and absolve from heresy, as the Pope might demand; or by the removal of persons. *Bear in mind that jurisdiction is for the benefit of the subjects and not for those in charge.* Or, if I withdraw from the power of the Bishop by leaving his diocese, I remove from him the authority he has over me, but I do him no wrong. *That is how it is with us, but this*

topic should be given a great deal of thought. . . . The Pope did not give the power. If, in the beginning, he had been led to understand this, he would have done so. A Superior is obliged to give a person the means to attain an end for which he designates him. Thus . . . *because the Superior sins mortally if he errs in this, etc., and consideration should be given to these matters.* The Archbishop of Paris,²⁸ the Pope's representative in this matter, studied it closely for three years and raised strong objections to it; nevertheless, he said that he felt it necessary, declaring that he did not think it necessary to go to Rome; but someone will go, just the same.

But people take vows that have to be dispensed *at a later time*. —The Jesuits have done that. In fact, people vow, *not to observe the Rules, but to observe the vows in accordance with the Rules.*

But what is our poverty? Answer: The Canons of Saint Augustine take a vow of poverty and are Pastors and Canons; the Knights of Malta hold the office of Commander with their vow of poverty, etc. Everyone should uphold the vows, etc. It is said, however, that we could not have made this Rule. *On the contrary:* we can make a Rule for something that is lawful, fair, and not contrary to the holy canons. Now, this one is such, etc.; he proves this by induction, etc.

Exhortation of August 9. In conclusion, we have great reason to thank Our Lord for what has been accomplished during this Assembly because: (1) owing to the state of affairs, it has made us aware that we can hope for God's assistance; (2) our Rules have been finalized—or almost finalized—and can remain fixed; (3) we see how necessary it is for us to work constantly to have both our Rules and our vows approved; (4) we are aware that we will have to deal with a very serious matter in the event that the Rules are not approved before the death of the Superior General; that those who are voting for the election of his successor will be the Superiors of all the houses of Europe—including Ireland and Africa—along with one priest elected by the house, who will accompany him [the Superior], and not [just] the Assistants and the Visitors; in this way they will remain faithful to the terms of Common Law. The convocation

²⁸ Jean-François de Gondi.

will be made by whomever the Superior General has named Vicar-General, who will preside over it, etc. And, in the event that none has been named, the Assistant of Saint-Lazare, who represents the Superior General, will be the one by right.

So, two things were proposed:

(1) To decide whether the Rules will be read over again. The decision was taken to have them reread by only two or three men; nevertheless, everyone would sign them because Rules are like our hands: the more we wash them, the more they have to be washed; or like hens who always find something to peck at in a place through which they pass a hundred times.

(2) To decide whether the first Assembly will be bound by oath to follow the Rules, in the event that they are not approved. If the present Pope does not approve our vows, or the one who comes after him, three or four years after his coronation, we will go back to the original way of taking them. That the General will not be elected unless he swears to observe and have others observe and approve the Rules as they are, for fear that his supreme authority may lead him to want to change something.

The means. Prayer and union. Reverend Mother de Chantal used to say that neither the holiest, nor the most learned persons, nor great minds were suitable for being Superiors, but only those committed to their vocation, to the Rule, etc. Always respect confidentiality. The Assistants should see that the Rules are observed and endeavor to get them approved.

106. - APPROVAL OF THE RULES OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(August 11, 1651)

Although it pleased the most holy Lord, Pope Urban VIII, of happy memory, to grant us through the Bull of Erection¹ of our

Document 106. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Register of Assemblies, written in Latin.

¹*Salvatoris nostri* (cf. Doc. 84a).

aforesaid Congregation the faculty of composing whatever Constitutions and Statutes pertain to the favorable governance of the above Congregation, provided they be licit and proper and in no way contrary to the Sacred Canons and Apostolic Constitutions, the decrees of the Council of Trent, and our Institute; and approved by the Most Illustrious Archbishop of Paris, delegate of the Apostolic See for this matter; we, Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, having through the mercy of God diligently devoted ourselves for some time to composing the Rules and Constitutions necessary and useful for our Institute, and having drawn up and put them in order, judged it expedient to convene, and as a matter of fact did convene, on October 13, 1642, some Superiors of our houses existing at the time, together with certain other older men whom we judged to have more experience in our way of living. These men are Messieurs Jean Dehorgny, Superior of the Collège des Bons-Enfants; Jean Bécu, Superior of the house in Toul; Lambert aux Couteaux, Superior of the Richelieu house; Jean Bourdet, Superior of the house in Troyes; Pierre Duchesne, Superior of the Crécy house in the Meaux diocese; and, in place of those absent, Messieurs Antoine Portail, François du Coudray, Antoine Lucas, Léonard Boucher, and René Almérás, all priests of our Congregation.

We communicated to them the aforesaid Rules and Constitutions; on their advice, it seemed to us at that time that this endeavor could not be resolved in every way, not only because of insufficient time, but especially because we needed a longer practice of these Rules before committing them to writing. In the meantime, we have delegated four of the above-mentioned Fathers: Antoine Portail, Jean Dehorgny, Lambert aux Couteaux, and René Almérás, to weigh and consider the Rules more carefully and opportunely, along with us.

But, so that we might at some point put the finishing touches to a work so necessary and useful to our Congregation, on July 1 of this year 1651 we held another Assembly of some Superiors of our houses and other men who we felt were more experienced in our way of living; namely, Messieurs René Almérás, Superior of the

house in Rome; Étienne Blatiron, Superior of the Genoa house; Antoine Lucas, Superior of the Le Mans house; Lambert aux Couteaux, Superior of the Richelieu house; Gilbert Cuissot, Superior of the house in Cahors; François Grimaldi, Superior of the Agen house; Louis Thibault, Superior of the Saint-Méen house in the Saint-Malo diocese; Jean-Baptiste Le Gros, Superior of the Petit Saint-Lazare house; and Messieurs Antoine Portail, Jean Bécu, Jean Dehorgny, Jean-Baptiste Gilles, and Pierre Duchesne, priests of the Congregation. Together with them and with their advice, after carefully and opportunely examining the Rules and Constitutions, we judged, and do in fact judge in the Lord, that they are conformable to our way of living, the purpose and Institute of our Congregation, and the other conditions required by the aforesaid Bull, and, in fact, have even been practiced by us for about twenty-five years; consequently, they can be presented by us to the Most Illustrious Archbishop of Paris for his approval, in line with the tenor of the Bull.

Whereupon, on the advice of the aforesaid men, we judged that by these present letters the Most Illustrious Archbishop should be asked and entreated, with all possible humility, reverence, and authority, to be willing, according to his customary fatherly kindness toward us, to approve by his authority the Rules and Constitutions, Common as well as Particular, and in this way to add to them the strength of inviolable apostolic constancy. And we will pray that Almighty God will always be his exceedingly great reward.

In testimony whereof, we, together with all the assembled priests of the Congregation, have signed the present letters in our own hand.

Drawn up at Saint-Lazare in the Paris suburbs on August 11, 1651.

Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission; A. Portail; Étienne Blatiron; Gilbert Cuissot; Louis Thibault; René Alméras; Jean Dehorgny; Jean Bécu; Lambert aux Couteaux; Antoine Lucas; François Grimaldi; Pierre du Chesne; J-B. Gilles.

107. - AUTHORIZATION FOR LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX
AND COMPANIONS TO TRAVEL TO POLAND

(September 4, 1651)

Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, to our beloved brothers in Christ of our Congregation, Lambert aux Couteaux and Guillaume Desdames,¹ priests; Nicolas Guillot,² subdeacon; Kazimierz Stanislaw Zelazewski,³ seminarian; and Jacques Posny,⁴ coadjutor Brother; greetings in the Lord.

In accordance with the Bull of Erection of our Congregation, we are bound to apply ourselves to the salvation of the neighbor in harmony with the manner indicated therein and the Rules of our Institute, wherever Divine Providence shall call us. For some years now, the Most Serene Marie de Gonzague, Queen of Poland, wife of the Most Invincible and Most Serene Casimir,⁵ King of Poland, has deigned to request for the kingdom of Poland some of our men who, applying themselves to our ministries and functions at the good pleasure of the Most Distinguished and Most Reverend Bishops, might labor in this vineyard of the Lord. Therefore, desiring earnestly to comply with the commands of so great a Princess, with all humility and due reverence in keeping with our insignificance, and duly informed long ago of your integrity in all matters, your competence, and your practical experience in many things; in consequence of the request of the Most Serene Queen, and by the present letters,⁶ we send you to the mission of Poland to devote yourselves to all the functions of our Congregation.

We instruct all of you to show obedience and respect in all things in the Lord to M. Lambert aux Couteaux, whom we have designated and appointed, and by these letters do designate and appoint, for

Document 107. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Krakow file, original signed document, written in Latin.

¹Guillaume Desdames (cf. VIII, 88, n. 1).

²Nicolas Guillot (cf. VII, 68, n. 3).

³Stanislaw Kazimierz Zelazewski (cf. V, 51, n. 4).

⁴Jacques Posny (cf. V, 51, n. 5).

⁵Jan Casimir (cf. VIII, 89, n. 5).

⁶Coste, p. 360, here omits *[manda]tum vos in dicta Poloniam missionem* and inserts *[corporalem designavimus et deputavimus]*, which is not in the original document.

your spiritual and temporal direction and governance. We give and grant him the authority and faculty to accept foundations and houses, draw up contracts, and effect with outsiders other things of this nature that will seem necessary to be carried out at the time for the good of the Congregation in Poland. We appoint him in our stead for all matters in this regard, according to our Institute and for the time we deem opportune, until we revoke this appointment.

Moreover, we earnestly request our Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Bishops, Pastors, and all those in charge of the churches to allow all of you in the Lord passage through their districts to celebrate Mass and to receive the sacraments, since it is clear that all of you are free from every ecclesiastical censure and irregularity.

We also ask all Princes, Viceroys, Governors, heads of cities, border guards, and guardians of roads and harbors to deign to grant all of you the faculty of coming and going safely and freely through their lands, for the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords,⁷ to whom we and our Congregation direct our devout prayers for their well-being.

In testimony of all these things, we have ordered the present letters, signed in our own hand, to be drawn up and signed by our ordinary Secretary, and authenticated with the seal of our Congregation.

Given at Saint-Lazare in Paris, September 4, 1651.

VINCENTIUS A PAULO,
Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission

By mandate of my aforesaid Superior General.

DUCOURNAU

⁷Cf. 1 Tim 6:15; Rev 17:14.

108. - SAFE-CONDUCT FOR THE MISSIONARIES
SENT TO PALAISEAU

(June 5, 1652)

I, the undersigned, Superior of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, informed by certain devout ladies of Palaiseau that half of the inhabitants of that town were ill, with ten or twelve of them dying daily, and on their request that I send some priests for the corporal and spiritual assistance of these poor people, suffering for twenty days from the presence of the army there, attest to whom it may concern that we have sent four priests and a surgeon there to help those poor people. In addition, since the eve of Corpus Christi,¹ we have sent them every day—except for one or two—sixteen large loaves of white bread, fifteen pints of wine, some eggs, and, yesterday, some meat. Moreover, since the priests of the Company informed me that flour and a hogshead of wine should be sent for the relief of those sick persons and those in neighboring villages, I have sent off today a cart drawn by three horses, laden with four setiers of flour and two hogsheads of wine, for the relief of the sick poor of Palaiseau and the surrounding villages.

In witness whereof, I have written and signed these present letters with my own hand at Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, June 5, 1652.²

VINCENT DEPAUL,
Superior of the Priests of the Mission

Document 108. - Archives of the Congregation of Rites, file on the beatification of Vincent de Paul.

¹May 29.

²Abelly, *op. cit.*, bk. III, chap. XI, sect. II, p. 124, and Collet, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 496, give this same date; Jules Gossin, in *Saint Vincent de Paul peint par ses écrits* [Paris: J. J. Blaise, 1834], p. 462, gives June 21. Perhaps Saint Vincent had a second set of passes delivered on June 21. What supports this supposition is that Gossin reads "two demi-hogsheads" in place of "two hogsheads."

109. - RULE OF LIFE FOR JEAN LE VACHER¹
AND MARTIN HUSSON²

(1653)

Since the Providence of God has called them to the city of Tunis for the corporal and spiritual assistance of all the poor Christian slaves there, they will bear in mind that this ministry is one of the most charitable they might ever carry out on earth. To fulfill it in a worthy manner, they should have special devotion to the mystery of the Incarnation, whereby Our Lord came upon earth to assist us in our slavery, in which the evil spirit was holding us captive.

They will be exact to the Rules of the Company and its holy customs and maxims, which are those of the Gospel, and work tirelessly to acquire the virtues that make a true Missionary: zeal, humility, simplicity, mortification, and holy obedience, and will devote themselves to the temporal and spiritual care of all the sick poor.

M. Le Vacher will be the Director of this little mission; M. Husson, wearing lay dress, will carry out the office of Consul, on the advice of M. Le Vacher, acting in public in the manner befitting a good, pious Consul with his Director, and he will follow his direction in the house and even outside, in those things not pertaining to the running of the consulate, which he will, nevertheless, carry out with the advice of M. Le Vacher, as has been said.

They will endeavor to use every precaution imaginable to get along with the Dey, the Pasha, the Customs House officials, and other leading citizens, and will willingly bear the insults said or done to them by the people.

They will strive to win over by patience the priests and religious who are enslaved there and will see to it that they are held in the honor due them and that they retain their little privileges.

Document 109. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, seventeenth- or eighteenth-century copy made from the original, which, according to the copyist, had been signed by Saint Vincent.

¹Jean Le Vacher (cf. VIII, 90, n. 7).

²Martin Husson (cf. VIII, 218, n. 4).

They will do all they can to maintain the greatest possible union among the merchants, treating them fairly but kindly and briefly, and will uphold them before the Lords and Magistrates of the region with all possible concern.

They will send us news of themselves with every boat that comes to France—not of the state of affairs of the country, but that of the poor slaves and the work Our Lord is entrusting to them.

If, without any danger, they can go to visit the poor slaves who are in the rural areas, they will do so and will endeavor to strengthen and console them, giving them some alms for this purpose.

They will submit to the laws of the country, except regarding religion, about which they will never argue nor make any disparaging remarks.

They will find out from those who have been living in that country for a long time anything that might anger those in power or give them any cause for suspicion or for provoking an avania, so as to avoid these.

They will give alms in proportion to their revenue, and, after seeing what they need for their annual upkeep, will give away the surplus. Since it is necessary for the Consul to distribute some in virtue of his position, M. Le Vacher, who will keep the money, will give him some for this purpose whenever he asks—not only to distribute the alms, but for his personal needs and those of his office. Now, each will be exact about writing down the names of the slaves whom he assists, along with the amount he gives them, and will notify the other so that both do not give to the same person and so that M. Le Vacher can use these reports to show, by the annual accounts he will send us, to whom and how much has been given monthly.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
unworthy Priest of the Mission

110. - STUDY OF THE VOWS TAKEN
IN THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION
AND OF THE PRIVILEGE OF EXEMPTION

[Between 1653 and 1655]¹

His Holiness Urban VIII, of happy memory, by the Bull of Erection of the Congregation of Priests of the Mission, issued January 12, 1632,² granted the Superior General of the Congregation the faculty to make Statutes in order to maintain in their vocation the priests who had joined this Congregation. These Statutes, however, were to be approved by His Excellency the Archbishop of Paris.³ Using this faculty, the Superior General initiated a certain way of life expressly excluding the religious state, but still including the taking of the three simple vows, with no one accepting and receiving them.

His Excellency the Archbishop of Paris, not only as the local Ordinary but also as delegate of the Holy See, confirmed and approved this way of life on October 9, 1641, and August 23, 1653. For the greater stability of this Institute, the favor and vigor of the immediate support of apostolic confirmation is now being humbly requested in the hope that it will be granted.

This apostolic confirmation of such a way of life, including the taking and observance of the three simple vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, does not, however, constitute the religious state, which the members do not intend to profess.

For, in order to constitute the religious state, it is essential that such substantial vows be made in a religious Order approved by the Holy Apostolic See as a religious Order. Nor is it enough that a way of life be approved by it, unless it is approved as constituting the re-

Document 110. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original, written in Latin. This study was approved in Rome by the Congregation of Regulars, to whom it was presented. The Brief *Ex commissa nobis* (cf. Doc. 113) adopts its propositions.

¹This document mentions an act of August 23, 1653, and precedes the brief of September 22, 1655.

²*Salvatoris nostri*, issued by the Holy See on January 12, 1633 (cf. Doc. 84a, citation, for the explanation of this date).

³Jean-François de Gondi.

ligious state. This is clearly taught by the *Glossa*,⁴ *Cum ex eo verbo*, 3° de sent. excom; Abbas, *Rubrica de Regularibus*, no. 1; Angelus, under the heading *Religiosus*, no. 1; Silvester, in the article *Religio* I, q. I; Armilla, in the discourse *Religio*, no. 4; and Navarrus, *Commentario I de Regularibus*, no. 15, as quoted by Father Sanchez, l. 5, chaps. 3, 11, 19, in *praecepta Decalogi*.⁵

Therefore, since it is not sufficient to take the three substantial vows in a way of life approved as good even by the Apostolic See, unless it is ordinarily approved also as precisely including the religious state, the apostolic confirmation of a proposed way of life in which the religious state is neither petitioned nor intended, but is, in fact, expressly excluded, will not constitute that state.

For, says Silvester in the discourse *Religio* I, q. I, in order to distinguish whether a way of life approved by the Apostolic See has been approved as a religious state or simply as a good way of life, the words of the apostolic document must be consulted, and, in our case, the words of the confirmation by the Apostolic Delegate must be considered, under which immediate apostolic confirmation is being requested, in such a way, however, that the Congregation in question, because of the profession of the vow, can in no way be considered as belonging to the religious Orders, nor does it cease to belong to the body of the clergy. Thus it is demonstrated quite clearly that such a way of life has neither been approved by the Apostolic Delegate as a religious Order, nor has immediate apostolic confirmation been requested for such.

Indeed, in the Church of God there are examples showing that such a way of life has been approved as good but not as constituting the religious state. The *Glossa* of Clement, *Cum ex eo de Sent. Excom.*, speaks of the way of life of the Third Rule of Saint Francis

⁴*Glossa ordinaria*: designation given the twelfth and thirteenth century compilations of explanations of texts (glosses). The schools and courts generally held that the *glossa ordinaria* provided defensible original opinions and were considered by some the final authority in questions of Canon Law, to the extent that they were the ones most likely to be adopted by the Roman Curia (cf. *Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 6).

⁵Noted canonists and theologians of the period: Nicolas de Tudeschis, called Abbas; Blessed Ange de Clavasio, Friar Minor of the Observance; the Dominican Silvestro Mozzolino, author of a theological *Summa*; Martín Navarro, a Spanish canonist; and Tomás Sanchez, a Jesuit theologian.

approved by Pope Nicholas III⁶ but not as a Rule that makes the one professing it a true religious.

In his Commentary *I de Regularibus*, no. 15, Navarrus mentions certain priests who, without changing their clerical garb, take the three substantial vows as Oblates in the Monastery of Santa Maria de Montserrat but are not for that reason considered religious because they do not bind themselves to the Rule of Saint Benedict which is observed there. And when His Eminence Cardinal Contarello, then Prodatary, was questioned concerning the conferral of a certain regular benefice on one of the Fathers among those Oblates, he replied that he was not a true religious on whom a regular benefice could be conferred in title.

So, if those Oblate priests in the service of that monastery make the three substantial vows and yet are not religious, why cannot these Priests of the Mission, like Oblates dedicated to the service of the Bishops, take the same substantial three vows without placing themselves in the religious state?

Finally, those Roman ladies of the highest nobility of the *Tor dei Specchi* in that city offer themselves to live according to a way of life approved as good by the Apostolic See itself but not by any Rule that would make them religious, although they sometimes take simple vows beyond what is required by that way of life.

So, the taking of simple vows in a way of life approved as good by the Apostolic See, but not as religious vows, does not constitute the religious state.

I grant that the taking of simple vows in the Society of Jesus suffices for the religious state, but the situation in our case is altogether different, for the way of life in that Society is approved by the Apostolic See as religious; for Gregory XIII, of happy memory, in the Extravagante *Ascendente*,⁷ declared that these simple vows in such a religious Order suffice to make them religious. Since then, this religious Order is approved as a true religious Order, and the Supreme Pontiff, who has the power to establish and approve religious Com-

⁶Nicholas III (1277-80).

⁷Gregory XIII (1572-85) issued this decree subsequent to the publication of the Roman edition of the *Corpus Iuris Canonici* of 1582.

munities wills that the simple vows, which in some other Community would not suffice without similar approval, suffice in that Society, it is not surprising that for both of these reasons they are, by taking simple vows, true religious in the full sense of the word. That is the opinion of Vasquez,⁸ I, 2 q., q. 5, art. 4, disp. 165, q. 6, nos. 105 and 106. The Priests of the Mission wish to exclude both requirements, as is evident from the way of life they have proposed for themselves; nor do they become, because of their simple vows, unfit and incapable of possessing goods and entering contracts, or become apostates, like the rest of religious, if they leave their chosen state.

And so that every difficulty may disappear, their vows are not only pronounced without any solemnity, ceremony, blessing, or consecration, but also without any Superior accepting them, even conditionally, in the name of God or the Congregation, whose acceptance Father Suarez requires for the essence of a religious Order in vol. 2 *de Relig.*, bk. 1, *de ess. et honest. vot.*, chap. 2, no. 12, justifying it by the chapter *Ap. de Regularibus*, and vol. 3, bk. 2, chap. 4, nos. 5 and 6, and bk. 6, chap. 2, no. 4, and elsewhere. Consequently, in order to defend the statement that simple vows in the Society make true religious, he affirms that in them there is a real and proper offering on the part of the one professing and acceptance on the part of the Society, vol. 4, bk. 3, *de admissione scholarium*, chap. 3, nos. 9 and 10.

Nor is there any valid objection in the fact that these vows are pronounced publicly, in the hearing of the Superior and a few others because, as Saint Thomas⁹ says, 2-2, q. 154, 5, ad 3um, by the fact that the vows are made publicly, they may have some spiritual and divine solemnity; hence there is a difference between a public vow and a solemn vow, and a vow will never constitute the religious state unless it is made in a way of life approved by the Holy See for a religious Order.

⁸Gabriel Vasquez, a Jesuit theologian.

⁹Saint Thomas Aquinas, Dominican philosopher and theologian.

Furthermore, the dependence of these priests on the Bishops, with regard to the missions and the work of salvation of the neighbor, does not exclude their personal dependence on their Superiors, and its addition cannot delay the requested apostolic confirmation because, first of all, the Supreme Pontiff Urban VIII,¹⁰ of happy memory, already established and regulated both of these dependencies in the Bull of Erection, which therefore cannot be discussed.

Thank God, not the slightest difficulty that might require an apostolic interpretation has so far arisen in any diocese regarding this combination, for which reason they consider it superfluous to request it before any such case of need, unforeseen until now, has occurred.

And the practice is such that, whenever Their Excellencies the Bishops request Missionaries for some mission, the Superior simply obeys such an order and sends from those approved by them whomever he judges most suitable for the work, just as when Their Excellencies, on the occasion of some solemn procession, request the participation of the churches subject to them in this matter, they are obliged to send someone—and, as a matter of fact, do not send some rather than others, but those best suited and capable for this function and its dignity.

Moreover, the above-mentioned previously praised Bull of Urban VIII not only removes every difficulty, but also very clearly explains the conditions on which they were admitted in Rome to perform their ministries by His Excellency the Vicegerent. By order of the Holy Father a meeting was held on that matter and a consultation with the Holy Father took place. They were admitted to carry out their ministries in Rome, but in such a way that, in whatever in these functions concerns the people, they are immediately subject to His Eminence the Vicar and to His Excellency the Vicegerent but are to obey their Superior General in everything else, in accord with the Bull of Erection. This must be the common law everywhere, and the local Ordinaries shall not demand more in their dioceses than His Eminence the Vicar, by mandate of the Holy

¹⁰Urban VIII (1623-44).

Father, in Rome. By this decree, hereby attached, every difficulty regarding this point seems to be resolved.

Therefore, etc.

**111. - THE MONKS OF SAINT-VICTOR MONASTERY
AT THE MARSEILLES SEMINARY**

(1655)

In the year 1655, at the earnest request of the Prior of Saint-Victor-lez-Marseilles,¹ and with the consent of our Most Honored Father and Superior General M. Vincent, this house took over the instruction and formation in good conduct of the young Benedictine monks and novices of the Saint-Victor House and Monastery in Marseilles. This was done at the entreaties and urgent requests of the Prior at the time, who, ardently desiring the reform of his house and seeing no means more suited to establish it there than a solid formation of the young men in religious discipline, turned to our house in the belief that, by God's grace and through the zeal and piety of our priests, it might contribute to the accomplishment of this plan. For this purpose it won the consent of the Superior General of the Congregation, who gave it only through condescension and with a commitment that was too hasty and doomed to disappointment because, in his great prudence and experience, he could not see how this plan, excellent though it was, could succeed.

Those young monks, most of whom were from the city of Marseilles, came to live with us as boarders, forming, as it were, a minor seminary, where they were taught the humanities according to their ability and were exhorted and helped to live religious life and the regular observance of which they were making profession. Since,

Document 111. - Arch. Nat., S 6707, notebook from around 1670.

¹Relaxation had slipped into the renowned Benedictine Abbey of Saint-Victor in Marseilles. On September 7, 1656, the Prior assembled his religious in Chapter and had them adopt the resolution to recall their young men from all the places where they were studying grammar, classics, and philosophy, and to entrust them to the Priests of the Mission in Marseilles. The Missionaries accepted most of them as boarders in their house and taught them the humanities.

however, most of those young men had no other vocation to religious life than the will of their parents, who wanted them out of their homes and provided with a subsidy as religious such as a benefice, these youths, having no idea what it meant to be monks, followed their feelings and inclinations, and were undisciplined and roguish, seeking only to satisfy their senses. The result was that, when we saw in them no sign of good nor any hope of reform, we were obliged, after a trial period of one year, to ask the Prior and their parents to withdraw them from our house. They did so, although regretfully and after imploring the Superior of this house to keep them for a few more years.

**112. - BULL OF ALEXANDER VII¹ FOR THE UNION
OF SAINT-LAZARE PRIORY TO THE MISSION**

(April 18, 1655)

Alexander, Bishop and Servant of the Servants of God, to our beloved son, the Officialis² of Paris, greetings and apostolic blessing.

We consider it right and reasonable that a benefit to be conferred by the Roman Pontiff should achieve its effect, especially in view of the unwearying pursuit of every Congregation of priests and the persons in them under the observance of a particular Institute, and who have been particularly meritorious in terms of spreading the Catholic faith, both in regard to those petitioning and those serving and for the further progress and happier state of the members, even though the apostolic letters for this were not completed because of the death of the Pontiff which intervened.

Since then, a petition was presented to our predecessor Pope Urban VIII, of happy memory, on the part of our beloved son Vincent

Document 112. - Arch. Nat., MM 534, pp. 40ff., copy, written in Latin.

¹Alexander VII (1655-67).

²The Officialis, or Judicial Vicar, is appointed by the Bishop and given the ordinary power to judge, which is distinct from that of the Vicar-General. The Officialis constitutes one tribunal with the Bishop, but he cannot judge cases which the Bishop reserves to himself (cf. *Code of Canon Law*, Latin-English edition [Ann Arbor, Michigan: Braun-Brumfield, 1983], Canon 1420, p. 511).

de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, in which it is stated that there existed, in the suburb of Saint-Denis of the city of Paris, a certain hospice known as the leprosarium of Saint-Lazare, instituted and endowed from ancient times by the mayor and magistrates of Paris mentioned below, to nurse and care for the residents of the city who were afflicted with leprosy. In the course of time it acquired the name and title of priory, which it was called even then. From the time of its foundation, its income had been administered by certain secular and regular priests, or perhaps even by laymen, whom the then Bishop of Paris was accustomed to appoint and remove, until the year 1513, when Poncher,³ of happy memory, Bishop of Paris at the time, entrusted this administration to the reformed Canons Regular of the Order of Saint Augustine, introducing them into the aforesaid priory, with the obligation of reciting the Canonical Hours in the church of the priory, celebrating a sung Mass there daily, and receiving poor lepers who might come to them, supplying their necessities. Along with this, the man whom the Bishop of Paris had chosen from among those religious as Prior for the time being became, at the discretion of the Bishop, Administrator of the priory and hospice and its income, with the obligation of rendering an annual account of his administration to the same Bishop.

Not long ago, however, Adrien Le Bon, a solemnly professed priest of the same Order, Prior or Administrator at that time, appointed by Henri de Gondi, of happy memory, known during his lifetime as Cardinal de Retz of the Holy Roman Church and Prelate of the Paris diocese, reflected, along with the other religious of the same priory or hospice who were still living there, that no lepers had

³Hoping to bring about a reform in Saint-Lazare Priory, Étienne Poncher had installed there the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine from Saint-Victor Abbey, and the religious had continually occupied the Priory since 1513. They had come to consider it their own property, which it really was not. All the provisions of their tenure indicated that the Bishops of Paris reserved to themselves the right to recall the Prior and even to replace the religious of Saint-Victor with other priests. Moreover, on December 5, 1625, the religious of Saint-Victor Abbey had decided that the various houses of the Order would henceforth be independent from the abbey. This was, in fact, a renunciation of their rights over Saint-Lazare. Although Pope Urban VIII had signed a Bull on March 15, 1635, uniting the Priory to the Congregation of the Mission, it was never sent. This Bull formalized the union of the Priory to the Congregation.

been present for a long time, nor are now present in the priory or leprosarium, so the revenues left by the Founders no longer served the purpose for which they had been designated. They thought it would be very worthwhile to assign these same revenues to those workers who offered spiritual food and medication to persons afflicted, not with bodily leprosy, but with that of the soul.

Among other Institutes, that of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, erected not long ago by apostolic authority in the city of Paris, is especially conspicuous. Its members, in consideration of their own proper and particular Institute, had proposed for themselves the instruction, in things pertaining to the salvation of souls, of people living in country towns and villages, freely and for the love of God, expecting the reward for their labors from God alone. It was obvious that in carrying out this work they had expended and continued to expend such great and assiduous efforts and tireless zeal for souls and bodies that, by their teaching, they reached many people in the different regions and provinces of France, but chiefly in the Montauban diocese. These persons, after abjuring the ignominy of heresy, with which they were tainted, embraced the Catholic faith, as was the common report throughout France.

For this reason, the religious of the leprosarium thought it would not be contrary to the intention of the Founders if the revenues designated for the care of bodily leprosy be assigned to those who care for the leprosy of souls, giving them the means to be able to dedicate themselves to this work. Under the good pleasure of the Apostolic See and the Archbishop of Paris, they drew up with the said Vincent, acting in the name of his Congregation, a contract which was approved and confirmed by our predecessor, whereby Adrien Le Bon, its Prior or Administrator, and the religious of this priory or hospice, agreed to hand over all their own rights and interests so that the priory with its church, buildings, and each and every one of its goods, rights, profits, appurtenances, and dependencies be granted to the Congregation, renouncing every right associated with the priory or leprosarium and its competent administration, as stated in greater detail in the duly compiled public document mentioned above.

Next, on the strength of this contract, entered into under certain clauses and conditions as expressed above, to be approved and confirmed by apostolic authority, Jean-François de Gondi, the then Archbishop of Paris, granted it because to him and to his predecessors, as was said previously, belonged the appointment and removal of the Prior or Administrator of the priory or leprosarium. Noting wisely that the introduction of the priests of the Congregation into the priory or hospice would yield concession of it and its affairs, properties, and profits to the same Congregation for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls, and fully informed of the contract and all it contained, he granted in perpetuity to the same Congregation, by his ordinary authority, with the consent of the Most Christian King of France and of Navarre, and of the Provost of Merchants and the Magistrates of the city, founders of the same priory or hospice, its goods, gardens, properties, profits, and emoluments, together with its church and all of its buildings, as well as all the liberties, franchises, and privileges pertaining to it, with the obligation of observing permanently the clauses and agreements contained in the aforesaid contract, and under the conditions written below, namely:

That the said Adrien continue thereafter to act as Superior of the religious, and that those same religious show him the obedience they had professed; that, for the time being, the Archbishop of Paris maintain full jurisdiction and the right of visitation in spiritual and temporal affairs over the priory and the priests of the Congregation residing there for the time being; that those priests, one of whom will be elected Superior by the Congregation itself, recite the canonical Divine Office in choir in a moderate tone, without chant, and with the doors of the choir closed, and celebrate the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in a low voice, lest they be delayed in their ministry of going through the villages and teaching in them; that they fulfill all the foundation Masses and offices of the priory or hospice and receive any lepers from the city and its environs;

That at least twelve members of the Congregation be stationed there, eight of whom would be priests engaged in going through the villages of the Paris diocese at the expense of the Congregation it-

self, staying one or two months in each village, according to the needs of the place; that they teach there the mysteries of Faith, hear confessions—especially general confessions—instruct in Christian doctrine those who are uneducated, prepare others for the worthy reception of the Most Holy Eucharist, and arrange peace between those who are at odds with one another; that they be bound to admit at the customary times when Orders are conferred in Paris the ordinands sent to them by the Archbishop of Paris, receiving them in the priory or hospice and furnishing them with what they need by way of room and board during the two-week period they are with them preceding ordination;

That they engage them in spiritual exercises such as general confession, daily examination of conscience, meditation on the change in their state of life and on those things proper to each Order and fitting for priestly men, and teach them to perform properly the ceremonies of the Church. Once they have fulfilled these obligations they may apply to the common use of the Congregation whatever remains from the income and profits of the priory or hospice.

In virtue of these things, the same Archbishop Jean-François, in his own name and in the name of his successors, had released and exempted the aforementioned Priests of the Congregation from rendering an account of the administration and revenues of the priory or hospice and its annexes and dependencies, as outlined in greater detail in the letters previously drawn up for this by the Archbishop Jean-François himself, as mentioned above.

Since, however, everything mentioned previously had been done for the greater glory of God, as indicated in the same petition, and since the said Vincent, in thinking of how to carry it out, wanted all this to be strengthened by the protection of the Apostolic See, he humbly petitioned our predecessor to deign to grant his requests and, with apostolic kindness, to attend in a timely manner to the other matters mentioned below.

Indeed, when the same predecessor who, established by Divine Providence on the supreme summit of the Apostolic See, seeking always the welfare and progress of every Congregation, especially that of the Priests of the Mission, as well as the preservation of di-

vine worship and the spread and growth of the Catholic faith, by reason of which all the above things were said to have been done, was asked to strengthen them by his apostolic protection, as has always been done, having no certain knowledge about the aforesaid, ordered that these Institutes remain firm and permanently undiminished, and arranged things as he judged most expedient in the Lord. He absolved and declared absolved the said Vincent and the secular members of his Congregation from any excommunication, suspension, or interdict, as well as from all other censures and ecclesiastical penalties imposed *a jure vel ab homine*,⁴ by whatever occasion or cause, should they be under any such penalties. To achieve so great a result in the aforesaid matters, and accepting the above-mentioned contracts and document of the Archbishop, Jean-François, provided they were not contrary to the preceding statements, and being inclined at the time to petitions of this kind, he willed and granted at your discretion, on March 15, in the twelfth year of his pontificate, the mandate that, once all those were called who had to be summoned, and with the vote of the congregation of our venerable brothers the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, placed in charge of the affairs of Regulars, you might approve and confirm permanently the concession of the priory or hospice of this kind, its church and all goods, properties, and dependencies granted to the Congregation of the Mission by the Archbishop, Jean-François, as already mentioned, and each and every one of the items contained in the letters, provided they be licit and honorable, having legitimately followed everything in accord with the petitions of the parties, entreating you to add to them the force of perpetual and inviolable apostolic authority, and to supply for each and every defect of right, deed, and solemnities, even though substantial and required by law, if there were any; and to decree that Vincent himself be obligated to carry out the conditions laid down as contained in them, without being able to withdraw from them, and

⁴In present Church law "a penalty is incurred automatically by the very commission of the offense (*latae sententiae*)" *a jure*; or "a penalty is to be inflicted by a sentence (*ferendae sententiae*)" *ab homine* (Code of Canon Law, Can. 1314.).

that everything done contrary to them, by whatever authority, is null and void.

Nevertheless the priory or hospice, which is neither titular nor an ecclesiastical benefice but a simple administration, should exist as removable, at the will of the Archbishop of Paris of the time, together with its church and all its members and appurtenances, with each and every one of its burdens, reservations, clauses, and conditions contained in the contract and document, as well as in the letters of the Archbishop Jean-François, fully and sufficiently repeated here, which the same predecessor willed to hand over to the same Congregation of the Mission, in such a way that it be licit for its Superior and the priests of the priory or hospice, with its church and goods, all its rights and dependencies, to take possession freely by proper authority to be retained in perpetuity, for themselves or for others, in the name of the same Congregation or in their names. It will also be licit for them to collect and exact rent and dispose of their profits, revenues, products, rights, income, and emoluments, bearing the burdens and fulfilling the clauses and conditions contained in the contract and the document of the Archbishop Jean-François, and to apply what is left to the benefit and use of the Congregation, without having to seek permission for this from the local Ordinary or from anyone else. By the same apostolic authority you will likewise decree that the present document not be included under any revocations, suspensions, limitations, or other dispositions contrary to other favors similar or different, but be always exempt from them.

And, as often as it may happen that they are revoked, suspended, or attacked in some way, just as often you may decree by apostolic authority that they be restored, replaced, and reinstated in their original, most valid state; therefore, anything that may otherwise happen to them on the part of any judges, ordinary or delegated, or Nuncios of the aforesaid See, by any authority, knowingly or in ignorance, is null and void; the clauses of the most recently celebrated Lateran Council⁵ prohibiting permanent unions except in cases

⁵Fifth Lateran Council (1512-17).

permitted by law, and other Constitutions and apostolic ordinances of the priory or hospice and Order, even the power of an oath or apostolic confirmation; any endorsement, Statutes, customs, and anything else to the contrary notwithstanding.

As for the letters of our predecessor concerning the aforementioned absolution, approval, confirmation, strengthening, supplying for defects, concession, assignment, and decree, which were not sent because his death intervened, they are valid, no matter how long delayed; and so that the aforesaid Vincent and this Congregation, wishing and basing themselves on similar apostolic authority, not be deprived of their effect, we determine that the absolution, approval, confirmation, strengthening, supplying for defects, concession, assignment, and decree of this predecessor not be deprived of their effect, beginning on the day of the Ides of March, just as if the letters of the predecessor had been drawn up on the said day, as indicated above;

And so that the present letters may serve as fully approving absolution, approval, confirmation, supplying for defects, concession, assignment, and decree of the predecessor, as above, and may suffice everywhere, requiring no other supporting proof for this, we entrust to your discretion, through apostolic letters, that, when all those are called who should have been summoned, and with the petition of the parties, you may, by our authority, approve and confirm in perpetuity a concession of this kind, and concede, assign, and pronounce decisions on the priory or hospice, all the above-mentioned things notwithstanding.

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, the fourteenth day before the Kalends of May, in the year of the Incarnation of the Lord 1655, the first year of our pontificate.

**113. - EX COMMISSA NOBIS, BRIEF OF ALEXANDER VII
APPROVING THE VOWS TAKEN IN THE CONGREGATION
OF THE MISSION**

(September 22, 1655)

Pope Alexander VII, for the future remembrance of the matter.

Because of the responsibility given us by the Supreme Shepherd of the Lord's flock, we willingly devote ourselves to those matters which we judge, as the occasion may arise, to be in the best interests of the status of Congregations of ecclesiastical persons founded for the greater glory of the Divine Name and the salvation of souls.

Accordingly, we wish to remove some doubts that have arisen in regard to the status of the Congregation of the Mission, begun in France and subsequently approved¹ by the Apostolic See. We also wish to treat our beloved son, Vincent de Paul, Superior General of this Congregation, with special favors and kindness, absolving him and declaring him to be absolved from any ecclesiastical sentences, censures, and penalties of excommunication, suspension, and interdict *a jure vel ab homine*,² whatever the occasion or cause of imposition, if he be in any way bound by any of these, but only for the purpose of obtaining the effect of this letter.

Taking into consideration the petition humbly submitted to us in his name, and on the advice of our venerable brothers the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, interpreters of the Sacred Council of Trent, to whom we have referred the matter for examination, by our apostolic authority and by the tenor of this letter, we confirm and approve the Congregation of the Mission, already begun and approved in the manner we have stated, with the taking, after two years of probation, of simple vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, as also of stability in the Congregation, with the object of devoting oneself all one's life to the salvation of poor country people.

Document 113. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Vow Register, written in Latin, copy authenticated on November 1, 1655. The translation of this document is the one given in the 1989 English edition of *Constitutions and Statutes of the Congregation of the Mission*.

¹*Salvatoris nostri* (cf. Doc. 110, n. 2). The King of France issued his approval of this Bull on May 16, 1642 (cf. Doc. 88).

²Cf. Doc. 112, n. 4.

While these vows are being pronounced, no one shall assist with the purpose of accepting them in the name of the Congregation, or of ourselves, or of the Roman Pontiff at the time. Only the Roman Pontiff shall have the power to dissolve these vows so taken, as well as the Superior General of the Congregation when dismissing anyone from the Congregation. No other person, even in virtue of any Jubilee or Bull of Crusade or other privilege or indult, or other Constitution or concession whatsoever, shall have power to dissolve, commute, or dispense from them, if there be not therein special mention of these vows taken as above in the Congregation.

We further establish that the Congregation of the Mission be exempt from the jurisdiction of the local Ordinaries in all things, except that the persons who have been assigned to the missions by the Superiors of the Congregation will be subject to the Ordinaries, but only in regard to the missions and to those things which concern the missions. We establish also that the Congregation should not therefore be considered of the number of religious Orders, but that it is of the body of the secular clergy.

We decree that this letter is and always shall be firm, valid, and efficacious, and that it shall be approved and inviolably observed by all whom it concerns and will concern in the future; that it must be judged and defined by all judges, whether ordinary or delegated, even by auditors of the cases of the Apostolic Palace, according to what is stated above; and that any action to the contrary, whether done knowingly or in ignorance, by anyone or on any authority, is null and void; Apostolic Constitutions and ordinances, even conciliar, notwithstanding, or even, if the case should arise, ordinances of the Congregation, even fortified by oath, by apostolic confirmation, or by any other strengthening whatsoever; and Statutes, customs, privileges, or apostolic indults and letters notwithstanding, if contrary to what is stated above, no matter how granted, confirmed, or innovated. From all and each of these at this time we specially and expressly derogate, considering their contents as if this present letter were fully and sufficiently expressed and inserted in them in order to achieve the effects of this letter, other things to the contrary notwithstanding.

We wish further that the same acceptance, both in and outside of court, be granted to transcripts and printed copies of this letter, if signed in the hand of a public notary and stamped with the seal of a person constituted in ecclesiastical dignity, as would be granted to the present letter itself if it were exhibited or presented.

Given in Rome, at Saint Mary Major, under the ring of the Fisherman, September 22, 1655, the first year of our pontificate.

S. UGOLINUS³

**114. - ACCEPTANCE BY THE SAINT-LAZARE HOUSE
OF THE BRIEF *EX COMMISSA NOBIS***

(October 22, 1655)

We, Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, explained to our beloved brothers in Christ, the priests, seminarians, and coadjutor Brothers of our Congregation living in the Saint-Lazare House, and convoked and united in chapter, that, although our Most Holy Father Pope Urban VIII, of happy memory, had approved our Congregation and granted us through the Bull of Erection the faculty of forming certain Statutes and ordinances for its happy rule and governance, as well as what concerned the direction of houses and persons, it still had to be approved by His Excellency the Most Reverend Archbishop of Paris.

And since we, the Superior General, had indicated that it would be most expedient for the Congregation itself to be more closely united by a more perfect bond to God and to the Church, and its members to the head and to one another in a more holy way; for this purpose, each and every one, after two years of probation, should take the three simple vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and that of devoting themselves for their whole life in the Congregation to the salvation of

³Stefano Ugolini was Secretary of Briefs for Alexander VII. Appointed to that office in 1655, he became Titular Archbishop of Corinth in 1665 and was later named Titular Latin Patriarch of Constantinople. Ugolini was also Canon of St. Peter's in the Vatican and died in Rome on July 10, 1681.

Document 114. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Vow Register, written in Latin, original.

the poor country people. This, however, would be done in such a manner that these vows could be dispensed only by the Roman Pontiff or the Superior General of the same Congregation; therefore, the Congregation itself would not be considered a religious Order, nor would it cease to belong to the body of the clergy.

And so that we might proceed more surely in a matter of such great importance, in the years 1642 and 1651 we convoked in Paris the principal Superiors, together with some of the older priests of the Congregation, and discussed with them the simple vows already in use in our Congregation. They themselves not only praised this usage, but also judged that it should be continued, especially since the established approval of vows of this kind already existed, given on October 19, 1641, by His Excellency the Most Illustrious Archbishop of Paris, as Apostolic Delegate for approving the Statutes of our Congregation established by us, the Superior General.

And although the use of simple vows of this kind had been introduced so licitly by us, considered in such a timely way by the assembled Superiors and some of the older priests of the Congregation, so legitimately approved and confirmed by the Apostolic Delegate, and continued in such a holy way in the Congregation itself, both for the greater consolation of the Congregation, as well as for lasting steadfastness; it seemed desirable that the power of apostolic confirmation should be added to our vows of this kind. For which purpose, on the advice of our Assistants, we humbly petitioned our Most Holy Father Pope Alexander VII for the approval or confirmation of these simple vows. After having previously consulted the Sacred Congregation of the Most Eminent Cardinals of the Council of Trent, and having heard the very learned theologians on the validity and use of vows of this kind, he deigned with fatherly affection to grant this confirmation through a brief given in Rome on September 22 of the current year.

We presented the original of this brief¹ to the undersigned priests, seminarians, and coadjutor Brothers of our Congregation, who were assembled in Chapter. After the public reading of the brief in the presence of the undersigned, not only in Latin, as in the

¹The text of the original (cf. Doc. 113) was inserted here. Coste omitted it; the editors have followed his lead.

original, but also in French, translated verbatim from the same original for the benefit of our coadjutor Brothers, we asked each and every one of the undersigned priests, seminarians, and coadjutor Brothers whether they accepted a brief of this kind and submitted themselves to it. Filled with a common joy and very special filial gratitude to the Apostolic See for the much desired approval and confirmation of our vows, all responded unanimously: "We accept this brief and submit ourselves to it most willingly."

In testimony whereof, we, the undersigned Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, the priests, seminarians, and coadjutor Brothers, each and every one of the same Congregation, have signed this document and placed upon it the seal of our Congregation, and we have asserted that the present Act has been examined by the notaries public who have signed below.

Drawn up at Saint-Lazare in Paris, October 22, 1655.²

115. - FOUNDATION FOR THE ASSISTANCE OF BARBARY SLAVES

(December 20, 1655)

We, Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, acknowledge that a gentleman from this city of Paris, who made us promise never to reveal his name, moved by compassion for the great ills suffered by the Christians enslaved in Barbary and the loss of the souls who renounce Christianity there and become Muslims, has entrusted us with the sum of 30,000 livres to be used by us and by our successors for the relief and redemption of poor slaves by the priests of our Congregation, who have been residing for about ten years in the cities of Tunis and Algiers in Africa, where they have been assisting the poor slaves. I promise this in my own name and in that of my successors as General in our Company.

In testimony whereof, I have signed this letter with my own hand and have had it sealed with our seal and verified in the presence of the undersigned notaries.

²The signatures of fifteen priests and thirteen coadjutor Brothers were appended here.

At Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, December 20, 1655.

VINCENT DEPAUL

PALLU PAISANT

**116. - DECLARATION RELATIVE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT
IN CRÉCY**

[Between 1654 and 1660]¹

We, Vincent de Paul, Superior of the Congregation of the Mission, attest to all those whom it will concern that since our Company was established in the Meaux diocese, we have maintained three or four priests there in the town of Crécy and that they have worked constantly giving missions in the diocese, in the places where the Bishop of Meaux² or his Vicar-General has sent them, assisting the Bishop in his visitations of his diocese, going ahead of him to preach, catechize, and hear the confessions of the poor, preparing them by this means to receive the grace of the visitation. They continued to do so until [1654], when we recalled two of the priests to help us minister in this diocese and in other neighboring ones, leaving in our house in Crécy only one priest, a Brother, and a servant. The priest celebrates Holy Mass daily in our chapel, hears confessions in the parish there every Sunday, and visits all the sick who request this, while waiting until the disagreement between the Bishop and M. Lorthon,³ the King's secretary, is settled.

In testimony whereof, I have written and signed this letter in my own hand and have placed upon it the seal of our Company.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Document 116. - Reg. I, fol. 72v, from an autograph draft.

¹The date was not indicated in the manuscript. In 1654 the Crécy house was reduced to one priest only.

²Dominique Séguier (1637-59).

³Pierre de Lorthon, who played a major role in initiating the establishment of the house in Crécy.

116a. - RECEIPT SIGNED BY SAINT VINCENT

(June 4, 1657)

I, the undersigned, Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, established at Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, acknowledge having received from the noble person M[essi]re . . . ,¹ Councillor of the King and *Receveur* for the municipality of Paris, the amount of eight setiers of wheat, Paris measure, for the term expiring on the day and feast of this past Ascension, for the two muids of wheat that the Saint-Lazare House has the right to take annually on the said domain under the customary terms from which I release M . . .² and all others.

Given at Saint-Lazare, June 4, 1657.

VINCENT DEPAUL

**117. - BULL UNITING SAINT-MÉEN ABBEY TO THE SEMINARY
ESTABLISHED IN THAT PLACE¹**

(April 5, 1658)

Alexander, Bishop and Servant of the Servants of God, to our dear son the Officialis of Dol,² greetings and apostolic blessing.

Called to this supreme apostolic dignity, not through our own meager merits but by divine dispensation, and considering the numerous benefits resulting for the Christian community from the establishment of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission and the erection of seminaries entrusted to their care and direction over

Document 116a. - *Annales C. M.* (1951), p. 107. In September 1950, the mother of a former patient at Saint-Joseph Hospital, Paris, presented to the Daughters of Charity this family heirloom, a beautifully framed receipt signed by Saint Vincent.

¹The name was erased.

²The name was erased.

Document 117. - Archives of the Congregation of Rites, *Summarium additionale, Parisien., Beatificationis et Canonizationis Servi Dei Vincentii a Paulo*, undated manuscript, pp. 18ff., written in Latin.

¹Cf. VII, 162, n. 1, for the difficulties involved in this union.

²Dol-de-Bretagne, chief canton town of Ille-et-Villain.

a wide area, we attend with pleasure to all that may contribute to nurturing the progress and stability of these seminaries, especially when the pious, salutary desires of Christian Kings and the Prelates of the churches confided to them concur in this, and, when we deem it appropriate, we grant them favorably the blessings of our providence.

The petition which the present Superior of our beloved sons, the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, presented to us not long ago, confirmed the statement that our brother Achille de Harlay de Sancy,³ of happy memory, Bishop of Saint-Malo at the time, had made to us previously, expressing his distress that, although his diocese of Saint-Malo with its huge population extended over a large area, there was no public collège and no seminaries for boys or students for the priesthood, where the humanities, philosophy, and theology were being taught publicly. He also stated that the inhabitants of this diocese, lacking this world's goods for the most part, could not pay the necessary expenses to educate their children in a public school outside the diocese, and, therefore, the latter would remain deprived of literacy studies. Thus, whoever was Bishop of Saint-Malo at the time was obliged to accept ignorant clerics and priests who were uneducated and ill-suited for the care of souls. For these reasons, the people would not be adequately instructed in Christian doctrine and in the other things necessary for salvation. Furthermore, the income of the parish churches of that diocese was so meager that they would not be able to support the expenses required to maintain a seminary.

The Benedictine Monastery of Saint-Méen, however, situated almost in the center of the diocese, is not attached to any general Congregation nor dependent on any other principal monastery of any Order, but is subject to the visitation and discipline of the Bishop of Saint-Malo, at the time Bishop Achille, and which he obtained *in commendam* for life by concession and apostolic dispensation. For many years, observance of the Rule in this monastery has lapsed, and because only two monks of the Order are left now,

³Achille de Harlay de Sancy (cf. VII, 219, n. 2).

since the time of the aforementioned Bishop, and they are absolutely incapable of carrying out the duties of the monastery, its Abbot and Perpetual Commendatory felt obliged to call on secular priests to fulfill those duties.

Consequently, Bishop Achille, in keeping with the duties of his pastoral office and in order to meet the special needs of the people, erected and founded in the convent of the monastery and monastic buildings, by our apostolic authority confirmed later by us, a seminary for boys or students for the priesthood, in accordance with the Sacred Canons, where clerical students of the diocese would be faithfully formed, free of charge, in doctrine and morals, as well as in offices of piety, church ceremonies, and other matters necessary for divine worship and the instruction of the people. All of the above would be subject to the jurisdiction and correction of the local Ordinary and the perpetual direction and administration of the priests of the Congregation of the Mission, already erected and established by apostolic authority and recently confirmed by us. Five of its priests are already in residence; while those two monks are still alive, twelve students will be maintained, and, after the death of the monks, twenty seminarians will be maintained and educated, free of charge.

All this is being done at the urgent request of the clergy of the Saint-Malo diocese assembled in synod, with the consent of Louis our very dear son in Christ and Most Christian King of France and of Navarre, to whom the privilege of naming suitable persons for the monastery, vacant at the time, belongs by apostolic indult. It is also subject to the consent of the two monks and without prejudice to the abbatial table⁴ of the monastery, which remains completely separate from the conventual table, the living quarters, certain gardens, and the pond depending on the abbatial table. With the agreement of the Apostolic See, he has seen that each and every one of the goods and dependencies of the abbatial table of the monastery were applied previously, a certain portion of the assets and revenues as-

⁴A fund to guarantee the support of the monastery, its members, and its works.

signed, and appropriate measures taken for the maintenance of these two monks during their lifetime.

Lastly, an annual income of five hundred livres *tournois* was assigned in perpetuity to this seminary by Bishop Achille from his own resources, which he was able to dispose of legitimately by will. He also spent a considerable sum of money to purchase the furnishings needed for the seminary, in this way enabling the priests of the Congregation, as well as the seminarians, to perform services in the church of the monastery, recite the Canonical Hours, fulfill the obligations of pious foundations, hear the confessions of pilgrims coming there through devotion, supply books and vestments needed for the proper celebration of the Divine Offices, and keep the buildings in good repair, using for this purpose timber from the woods belonging to the Abbot or Perpetual Commendatory, as granted heretofore.

The Abbot or Perpetual Commendatory will be obliged to maintain in a proper state of repair the cloister, refectory, and other buildings, at his own expense, as formerly. The students will be selected by the Bishop of Saint-Malo at the time from his diocese and will be examined and approved by him or, in his absence, by his Vicar-General for spiritual affairs. Once they are admitted as students in the seminary, they will take an oath before the Bishop or, in his absence, before the Vicar-General, that, when they complete their studies at the seminary, they will not withdraw from the Saint-Malo diocese without the permission of the Bishop or his Vicar-General but will devote themselves to whatever sacred ministries or offices have been assigned to them and which can assure their maintenance appropriately, since they were maintained and educated for so many years in the seminary.

The Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission will appoint and send to the Saint-Malo diocese five priests of the Congregation, two of whom will devote themselves to the customary missions, and the remaining three to the direction and governance of the seminary and of the other priests living in it. They will admit for retreat clerics of the same diocese who are to be promoted to Holy Orders, with the authorization of the then Bishop of

Saint-Malo or his Vicar. These five priests will be subject to the Bishop of Saint-Malo of the time in everything relating to missions, the direction and governance of the seminary, and all functions pertaining to the salvation and assistance of the neighbor. For all else, however, they will remain subject to their Superior, according to the Rule of their Congregation. The priests will seek no exception to the above; otherwise, they can be removed by the Bishop of Saint-Malo at the time, and other priests substituted for them, subject to a free visitation and correction and to certain other legitimate, honorable conditions contained more fully in the above written documents.

As the aforesaid petition added, very great spiritual benefits are to be rightly expected in the diocese from the erection of this seminary and other things mentioned previously, and have, in fact, already begun. Therefore, so that no one may in the future raise any doubts concerning this foundation, the Priests of the Mission entrusted with its direction and administration are most anxious that the erection, application of funds, and other matters foreseen and promised—with, however, previous things of the Order and essence of regular conventual table being permanently suppressed and extinguished—be approved and confirmed, or granted anew, and that our venerable brother Ferdinand,⁵ Bishop of Chartres and recently Bishop of Saint-Malo, who obtained by similar apostolic grant and dispensation the handing over of the monastery *in commendam* for his lifetime, should agree to their request.

Wherefore, a humble request was made to us on behalf of those Priests of the Mission that, in accordance with our desire to support this worthy Institute by our paternal protection, we might deign to provide for its erection and, as indicated in the foregoing, accede in an appropriate manner to the application and assignment made by Bishop Achille; moreover, that we confirm and approve everything as being in proper order, together with the documents drawn up for this, that everything in them is legitimate and proper, and that we add the strength of perpetual and inviolable apostolic authority to

⁵Ferdinand de Neufville de Villeroy (cf. VII, 561, n. 4).

all these documents and the matters they contain, both of law and of fact. They desire furthermore that, in accordance with the benevolence appropriate to the apostolic office, we might provide for and correct any omissions or errors that may, in any way whatsoever, have arisen in the text.

In keeping with our concern for the good of those in the seminary, and to see that they produce in due course much good for the Church of God, we absolve the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, each and everyone therein, and declare them absolved from every excommunication, suspension, and interdict, and from any censures and ecclesiastical penalties by which they may be impeded, with a view to obtaining the effects of the present letters. In addition, accepting the contents of the documents, we submit the request for such absolution to your discretion. Seeing that the Episcopal See of Saint-Malo is now vacant, and, as the above-mentioned priests indicate, that our venerable brother in Dol is the nearest Ordinary, we command you by apostolic letter, to suppress and abolish, totally and forever, by our perpetual apostolic authority, every vestige of monastic Rule in the monastery, and all Regular status and dependency therein, with no prejudice to the abbatial table of the monastery.

With the consent of those holding a vested interest in the proceedings, after convening those entitled to be summoned and assuring in perpetuity the proposed revenue of five hundred livres, as mentioned earlier; and, on condition that the students to be accepted in the seminary are born of lawful wedlock and have satisfied the other conditions laid down by the Council of Trent, a seminary for youths or students for the priesthood is to be established in the same monastery buildings for the maintenance and formation of the clergy of the above-mentioned diocese by the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission in sufficient numbers to assure the service of the church, in accord with each and everything that is established above and ordained by Bishop Achille, without prejudice to the abbatial table of the monastery, taking into account any title to be conferred or any *commendam* that may exist. Once this seminary has been erected and established, each and every one of its goods,

properties, dependencies, rights, profits, revenues, and emoluments from any source whatsoever pertaining to the monastery and related in any way to the conventual table will be applied in such a way that the priests of the Congregation assigned to the management and direction of the seminary will freely take real and actual possession of all the above-mentioned goods, and will retain possession in perpetuity. You will, by the same perpetual authority, apply and appropriate to the needs of the seminary and their own use, by themselves or their agents, the profits, revenue, benefits, rights, and emoluments of the conventual table, with no need of a special permission from the Bishop nor from anyone else.

May you declare that these documents are, and always shall be in perpetuity valid, and efficacious to the benefit of the same seminary, its Directors, Administrators, and students; nor can they ever, through any deception, stealth, crafty operation, claim of nullity, lack of required intention on our part, or dispute of words, be assailed, invalidated, withdrawn, or reduced to an appeal or controversy in law. Even less, can they be subjected to revocations, suspensions, limitations, or contrary rulings by any vested interests or other similar or dissimilar situation, but shall always be exempt from them. If, however, they are subjected to any such disputation, they are to be, and will be, restored to their former status, and are thus subject to no scrutiny or judgment by any kind of judges, ordinary or delegated, auditors of the Apostolic Palace, and Roman Cardinals, even Legates *a latere* and Nuncios of the Holy See; and you must declare null and void anything that may be decreed, knowingly or unknowingly, contrary to what is laid down above concerning these matters by any authority whatsoever, including any previous decrees recently passed by the Lateran Council, except in the cases allowed by law preventing the establishment of unions, promulgated in universal, provincial, and synodal constitutions and by apostolic edict, even under oath with papal confirmation; statutes, customs, and norms whatsoever enjoyed by any other kind of power notwithstanding.

Given at Saint Peter's in Rome, on April 5, in the year of the Incarnation of the Lord 1658, the third year of our pontificate.

**117a. - COMMON RULES OF THE CONGREGATION
OF THE MISSION¹**

(May 17, 1658)

Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, to my dear brothers in Christ, the priests, students, and lay brothers of the Congregation, greetings in the Lord.

Here at long last, my dear brothers, are the Rules or Common Constitutions of our Congregation. You have been very anxious to have them and have had to wait a long time for them.

It is now about thirty-three years since our Congregation was founded, but I have not had our Rules printed for you before now. There were two reasons for this. Firstly, I wanted to take our Savior as a model. He put things into practice before He made them part of His teaching. Secondly, delaying their printing has avoided many problems which most certainly would have arisen if these Rules or Constitutions had been published too soon. There could have been problems about living up to them later on, as they might have seemed too difficult or not so relevant. With the help of God's grace, delaying like this has saved us from such a risk. It has also

Document 117a. - The editors have made use of the translation of the "Common Rules or Constitutions" contained in *Constitutions and Statutes of the Congregation of the Mission*, published in English in 1989. The Latin text for the Rules published in 1658 and the English translation of the 1954 edition have also been consulted. A few minor changes in translation and style have been made. In line with the 1917 Canon Law, articles V, 16; X, 6,11; and XI, 4, were suppressed in this 1954 edition.

¹In this presentation of the "Common Rules or Constitutions," the footnotes incorporate differences found in the text that has come to be known as the "Codex Sarzana." This manuscript was discovered in Sarzana, a small town in northern Italy, where the Congregation of the Mission has had a seminary since 1734. Among other documents, the manuscript contains a draft of the Common Rules. The Codex, entitled: "Common Rules and Constitutions of the Congregation of the Mission," is authentic and reflects Saint Vincent's thinking in the years just before his publication of the Common Rules in 1658. It does not have the Saint's introductory letter. (Cf. "Codex Sarzana," trans. and ed. by John E. Rybolt, C.M., *Vincentiana*, 33 [1991]: 303-406, hereafter cited as Sarzana.)

In the Common Rules, Saint Vincent referred to Scripture at least 174 times. This edition does not list all these quotations and allusions; they may be found in the following studies: William Dicharry, C.M., "Saint Vincent and Sacred Scripture," *Vincentian Heritage*, VII, no. 2, 1989, pp. 137-49; Maurice Vansteenkiste, C.M., "Les Règles Communes et la Bible. Citations explicites, implicites, et réminiscences," CD-ROM *Documents vincentiens, Ecrits et Images*, Claude Lautissier, C.M., Paris 2002; and François Garnier, "Enchiridion Spirituale Sancti Vincenti a Paulo IV: Textes Bibliques Cités par Saint Vincent," *Vincentiana*, 23 (1979): pp. 214-19, among others.

made it possible for the Congregation gradually and smoothly to get used to living the Rules before having them in print. You will not find anything in them which you have not been doing for a long time, and I must say how pleased I am that you do live by them and that they have enabled you all to help one another.

So, my dear brothers, take these Rules with the same affection which I have in giving them to you. Think of them, not as the product of human ingenuity, but as a gift from the Holy Spirit. Everything good comes from Him, and we are not qualified of ourselves to claim anything as our own achievement. After all, can you find one single thing in them which will not be a help to you in avoiding evil, in growing in virtue, and in putting into practice the teachings of the Gospels? And, as you can see, I have tried to base all the Rules, where possible, on the spirit and actions of Jesus Christ. My idea was that men who are called to continue Christ's mission, which is mainly preaching the good news to the poor, should see things from His point of view and want what He wanted. They should have the same spirit that He had and follow in His footsteps.

That is why, my dear brothers, I ask you very sincerely, in the Lord Jesus, to make a genuine commitment to basing your life firmly on these Rules. You can take it as absolutely certain that if you do this you will find them sound guidelines which in the long term will lead you safely to the goal you long for, happiness in heaven. Amen.

JESUS, MARY, JOSEPH

CHAPTER I.—THE PURPOSE AND NATURE OF THE CONGREGATION

1.—We read in Sacred Scripture that Our Lord Jesus Christ, sent on earth for the salvation of the human race, did not begin by teaching; He began by doing. And what He did was to integrate fully into His life every type of virtue. He then went on to teach, by preaching the good news of salvation to poor people, and by passing on to His

Apostles and disciples what they needed to know to become guides for others. Now, the little Congregation of the Mission wants, with God's grace, to imitate Christ the Lord, in so far as that is possible in view of its limitations. It seeks to imitate His virtues as well as what He did for the salvation of others. It is only right that if the Congregation is to do the same sort of work, it should act in the same sort of way. This means that the whole purpose of the Congregation is: (1) to have a genuine commitment to grow in holiness, patterning ourselves, as far as possible, on the virtues which the great Master Himself graciously taught us in what He said and did; (2) to preach the good news of salvation to poor people, especially in rural areas; (3) to help seminarians and priests to grow in knowledge and virtue, so that they can be effective in their ministry.²

2.—There are both clerical and lay members in the Congregation. The work of the former is to travel around through towns and villages, as Christ Himself and His disciples did, breaking the bread of the Divine Word for the neglected by preaching and catechizing. They should also urge people to make general confessions of their entire life and hear these confessions. Their ministry also includes settling quarrels and disputes, establishing the Confraternity of Charity, staffing seminaries which have been set up in our houses for diocesan clergy, giving retreats, and organizing meetings of priests in our houses. Their work also includes any other ministry which is supportive to those mentioned. The lay members help in these ministries like Martha in whatever way the Superior wants them to. This help includes "prayers and tears," mortification, and good example.

3.—If the Congregation, with the help of God's grace, is to achieve what it sees as its purpose, a genuine effort to put on the spirit of Christ will be needed. How to do this is learned mainly from what is taught in the Gospels: Christ's poverty, His chastity

²Sarzana: "Since Our Lord Jesus Christ was sent into the world to do always the Will of His Father, to preach the Gospel to the poor, and to give the Apostles and their successors saving knowledge for the remission of sin, and since the tiny Congregation of the Mission has been begun so that for its own reason it should, as best it could, follow in His footsteps, it is proper that its purpose should help seminarians and priests to acquire the knowledge of the saints, by which to direct the people into the way of salvation."

and obedience; His love for the sick; His decorum; the sort of life style and behavior which He inspired in His disciples; His way of getting along with people; His daily spiritual exercises; preaching missions; and other ministries which He undertook on behalf of the people. There is something on each of these in the chapters which follow.

CHAPTER II.—GOSPEL TEACHING

1.—Let each of us accept the truth of the following statement and try to make it our most fundamental principle: Christ's teaching will never let us down, while worldly wisdom always will. Christ Himself said that this sort of wisdom was like a house with nothing but sand as its foundation, while His own was like a building with solid rock as its foundation. And that is why the Congregation should always try to follow the teaching of Christ Himself and never that of the worldly-wise. To be sure of doing this we should pay particular attention to what follows.

2.—Christ said: *Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things which you need will be given to you as well.* That is the basis for each of us having the following set of priorities: matters involving our relationship with God are more important than temporal affairs; spiritual health is more important than physical; God's glory is more important than human approval. Each one should, moreover, be determined to prefer, like Saint Paul, to do without necessities, to be slandered or tortured, or even killed, rather than lose Christ's love. In practice, then, we should not worry too much about temporal affairs. We ought to have confidence in God that He will look after us since we know for certain that as long as we are grounded in that sort of love and trust we will be always under the protection of God in heaven, we will remain unaffected by evil and never lack what we need, even when everything we possess seems headed for disaster.

3.—A sure way for a Christian to grow rapidly in holiness is a conscientious effort to carry out God's Will in all circumstances

and at all times. Each one of us, then, should try to integrate into his life, as far as possible, these four principles: (1) We should conscientiously carry out what is ordered and avoid what is forbidden, when these orders or prohibitions come from God, from the Church, from our Superiors, or from the Rules or Constitutions of our Congregation; (2) when there is a choice open to us in matters neither ordered nor forbidden we should choose the less palatable rather than the more pleasing. This does not apply, of course, if the more pleasing things, being in some sense necessary, have to be chosen. Still, though, in such cases our motivation ought not to be that we like them, but simply that they are more pleasing to God. Finally, if when faced with a choice between things neither ordered nor forbidden there is no real element of personal preference between the options available, then any one of them may be chosen at random as coming from God's Providence; (3) when something unexpected happens to us in body or mind, good or bad, we are to accept it without fuss as coming from God's loving hand; (4) our motive for putting the above three principles into practice is that they are God's Will. It is in this way that we can imitate Christ the Lord. Christ always lived by these principles, and for that very motive. He tells us this Himself: *I always do what pleases the Father.*³

4.—Jesus the Lord expects us to have the simplicity of a dove. This means giving a straightforward opinion about things in the way we honestly see them, without needless reservations. It also means doing things without double-dealing or manipulation, our attention being focused solely on God. Each of us, then, should take care to behave always in this spirit of simplicity, remembering that God likes to deal with the simple, and that He conceals the secrets of heaven from the wise and prudent of this world and reveals them to little ones.

³Sarzana: "Since the primary purpose of the Congregation consists in doing the Will of God in all things, and doing it as well as possible, it is certain that the means by which the kingdom of God comes to the Christian people, and through us to the neighbor, [is that] each one should try to integrate this exercise into his life as far as possible (1) by fulfilling divine and human commands, and (2) by fleeing what is forbidden; and (3) when matters are indifferent, by choosing those things which are less pleasing to the senses; (4) by tolerating calmly what is repugnant; and by following after God's Will to fulfill it in all things with Christ."

5. But while Christ recommends the simplicity of a dove He tells us to have the prudence of a serpent as well. What He means is that we should speak and behave with discretion. We ought, therefore, to keep quiet about matters which should not be made known, especially if they are unsuitable or unlawful. When we are discussing things which it is good and proper to talk about we should hold back any details which would not be for God's glory, or which could harm some other person, or which would make us foolishly smug. In actual practice this virtue is about choosing the right way to do things. We should make it a sacred principle, then, admitting of no exceptions, that since we are working for God we will always choose God-related ways for carrying out our work, and see and judge things from Christ's point of view and not from a worldly-wise one; and not according to the feeble reasoning of our own mind either. That is how we can be prudent as serpents and simple as doves.

6. We should make a great effort to learn the following lesson, also taught by Christ: *Learn from me because I am gentle and humble of heart*. We should remember that He Himself said that by gentleness we inherit the earth. If we act on this we will win people over so that they will turn to the Lord. That will not happen if we treat people harshly or sharply. And we should also remember that humility is the route to heaven. A loving acceptance of it when we are humiliated usually raises us up, guiding us, as it were, step by step from one virtue to the next until we reach heaven.

7.—This humility was very often recommended by Christ Himself, by word and example, and the Congregation should make a great effort to master it. It involves three things: (1) to admit in all honesty that we deserve people's contempt; (2) to be glad if people notice our failings and treat us accordingly; (3) to conceal, if possible, because of our personal unworthiness, anything the Lord may achieve through us or in us. If that is not possible, though, to give the credit for it to God's mercy and to other people's merits. That is the basis of all holiness in the Gospels and a bond of the entire spiritual life. If a person has this humility everything good will come along

with it. If he does not have it, he will lose any good he may have and will always be anxious and worried.

8.—Christ said: *Anyone who wants to come after me must deny himself and take up his cross each day*; and Saint Paul added, in the same vein: *If you live according to your unspiritual nature you shall die, but if, by the Spirit, you mortify it you shall live*. Each one, therefore, should be most conscientious in accepting the overruling of his personal wishes and opinion, and in disciplining the gratification of each of his senses.⁴

9.—In the same spirit each one is to avoid over-attachment to relatives. Christ indicated this when He refused to have as a disciple anyone who did not “hate” his father, mother, brothers, and sisters. He promised a hundredfold in this world, and eternal life in the next, to all who left family for the sake of the Gospel. All this goes to show what an obstacle to full Christian living blood relationships can be. Parents, of course, are to be loved in a spiritual way, as Christ showed.

10.—Each one should show a great eagerness in that sort of openness to God’s Will which Christ and the saints developed so carefully. This means that we should not have a disproportionate liking for any ministry, person, or place, especially our native land, or anything of that sort. We should even be ready and willing to leave all these things gladly if our Superior asks it, or even hints at it, and to put up, without complaint, with any disappointment or disruption this causes, accepting that in all this the Superior has done well in the Lord.

11.—Christ the Lord wished to lead a communal style of life, so that He would be like other people and in that way win them over more easily to God the Father. All of us, then, as far as possible, are to maintain uniformity in everything; we should look on this as the safeguard of good order and of the holiness which comes of being together. In the same way we should avoid anything out of the ordi-

⁴Sarzana: “Christ said: ‘Anyone who wants to come after me must deny himself and take up his cross each day.’ Each one, therefore, must be most conscientious without interruption . . . gratification of each of his senses in matters both permitted and forbidden, especially those things which run greatly contrary to the teaching of the Gospels.”

nary, as it can be the cause of jealousy and disagreement. All this applies not only to food, clothing, bedding, and so on, but also to methods of direction, teaching, preaching, exercising authority, and even spiritual practices. Only one thing is needed for this uniformity to be maintained constantly among us, namely, the most exact observance of our Rules and Constitutions.⁵

12.—Charitable behavior toward the neighbor should always be characteristic of us. We should try, then: (1) to behave toward others in the way we might reasonably expect to be treated by them; (2) to agree with others, and to accept everything in the Lord; (3) to put up with one another without grumbling; (4) to weep with those who weep; (5) to rejoice with those who rejoice; (6) to yield precedence to one another; (7) to be kind and helpful to one another in all sincerity; (8) finally, to be all things to all people so that we may win everyone for Christ. All of this is to be understood as in no way going against the commandments of God, or Church law, or the Rules or Constitutions of our Congregation.

13.—If Divine Providence ever allows a house or member of the Congregation, or the Congregation itself, to be subjected to, and tested by, slander or persecution, we are to be extra careful to avoid any retaliation, verbal abuse, or complaint against the persecutors or slanderers. We should even praise and bless God, and joyfully thank Him for it as an opportunity for great good, coming down from the Father of Lights. We should even pray sincerely to Him for those who harm us and, if the opportunity and possibility present themselves, should willingly help them, remembering that Christ commanded us, and all the faithful, to do this: *Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, and pray for persecutors and slanderers*. And to get us to do this more willingly and more easily He said that we would be blessed in doing so and that we should be joy-

⁵Sarzana: "Christ the Lord . . . God the Father. All of us, then, will flee what is out of the ordinary in all those things which can make us stand out in the sight of others, particularly regarding food and clothing, but also spiritual practices and individual opinions. We should understand that we cannot be out of the ordinary, especially in the very careful observance of our Rules and Constitutions. Likewise, all our striving should be for perfection; we have been called to this and we should work on it alone. Christ, too, taught us this by His own example, since He was not out of the ordinary, except that He was sent to fulfill the law and to carry out His Father's Will, which He commended to others."

ful and glad about it since our reward is great in heaven. And, more importantly, He was gracious enough to be the first to act in this way toward others so as to be a model for us. Afterward the Apostles, disciples, and numberless Christians followed His example.⁶

14.—We should follow, as far as possible, all the Gospel teaching already mentioned, since it is so holy and very practical. But some of it, in fact, has more application to us, particularly when it emphasizes simplicity, humility, gentleness, mortification and zeal for souls. The Congregation should pay special attention to developing and living up to these five virtues so that they may be, as it were, the faculties of the soul of the whole Congregation, and that everything each one of us does may always be inspired by them.

15.—Satan is always trying to divert us from living up to this teaching by suggesting his own, which is the exact opposite. Each one of us, then, should be fully aware of this, and completely ready to oppose and overcome all those things. This applies especially to those values which conflict more obviously with our Congregation, such as: (1) mere human prudence; (2) the desire for publicity; (3) always wanting everyone to give in to us and see things our way; (4) the pursuit of self-gratification in everything; (5) attaching no great importance to either God's honor or the salvation of others.

16.—The evil spirit often disguises himself as an angel of light, and now and then tricks us by his illusions. All of us must be ever alert for these tricks and should pay particular attention to learning how to recognize and overcome them. Experience has shown that the most effective and surest remedy in such cases is to discuss them as soon as possible with those appointed by God for this. So, if anyone feels himself troubled by ideas which seem to be in some way misleading, or upset by acute anxiety or temptation, he should tell his Superior, or a Director appointed for this, as soon as possible

⁶Sarzana: "If it should happen that Divine Providence should ever allow the Congregation, one of its houses, or one of its members to be subjected to, and tested by, slander or persecution, we will praise and bless God for this and joyfully thank Him for it as an excellent and perfect gift coming down from the Father of Lights. We will regard it as all joy when we fall into various temptations, and each one will refrain from any complaint, curse, or revenge against those who abuse us with calumny or who persecute us. Instead, we will pray for all of those and do good to them, if possible. Christ taught us this by word and deed, as did the Apostles, of whom it is written: They went out joyfully to suffer abuse for the name of Jesus."

so that the matter can be competently dealt with. And he should accept with approval, as coming from God's hand, whatever solution is suggested, and put it into practice with confidence and respect. Above all, he should take care not to discuss it in any way with anyone else, whether a member of the Congregation or not. Experience has shown that this worsens the problem, causes similar trouble for others, and can, in the long run, even do serious damage in the whole Congregation.

17.—God has told everyone to help others as members of the same mystical body. We, then, in the Congregation should help one another. So, if anyone is aware of someone else being greatly troubled by temptation, or of having been guilty of a serious fault, it will be his responsibility, promptly and in the best way possible, to see that effective remedies be suitably applied at the right time by the Superior. He must, of course, act from love and in the most practical way. Each one should accept it gratefully, as a means of spiritual progress, if his defects are pointed out to the Superior in a spirit of love by someone who has noticed them outside of confession.⁷

18.—Our Lord came into the world to reestablish the reign of His Father in all persons. He won them back from the devil who had led them astray by the cunning deceit of a greedy desire for wealth, honor, and pleasure. Our loving Savior thought it right to fight His enemy with the opposite weapons: poverty, chastity, and obedience, which He continued to do right up to His death. The little Congregation of the Mission came into existence in the Church to work for the salvation of people, especially the rural poor. This is why it has judged that no weapons would be more powerful or more suitable than those which Eternal Wisdom so tellingly and effectively used. Every confrere, therefore, should keep to such poverty, chastity, and obedience faithfully and persistently, as understood in our Congregation. And in order that each one might persevere until death in observing these virtues more certainly, easily, and meritoriously, he should try to the best

⁷Sarzana: "God has told everyone . . . a serious fault, without delay and in a spirit of love and humility, he will inform the Superior. He will be content that all his defects are pointed out to the Superior."

of his ability to carry out what is prescribed about them in the following chapters.⁸

CHAPTER III.—POVERTY

1.—Christ Himself, the Lord of all, lived in poverty to such an extent that He had nowhere to lay His head. He formed His Apostles and disciples, His co-workers in His mission, to live in the same sort of way so that individually they did not own anything. In that way they were freer to combat greed for wealth in a better and more practical way, a greed which is ruining almost the whole world. That is why each confrere must try, weak as he is, to imitate Christ in developing this virtue of poverty. We must all realize that it is the unbreachable rampart by which the Congregation, with the help of God's grace, will be defended.⁹

2.—Our ministry on missions could hardly be carried out if we lived in total poverty, since missions are to be given without charge. Nevertheless, we should try, in the Lord, to maintain poverty as an ideal and, as far as we can, in practice as well, especially as regards what is set out here.¹⁰

3.—Members of the Congregation, individually and collectively, should understand that, following the example of the first Christians, all our belongings are common property and are given out by the Superior to individual members, such as food, clothes, books, furniture, and so on, according to the needs of each. We have all accepted poverty, and so, to avoid any deviation from it, no one may, without the Superior's permission, dispose of any of this sort

⁸Sarzana: The last sentence does not appear.

⁹Sarzana: The paragraph concludes thus: "Therefore, no one should use anything as though it were his own personal property. Instead, each one should try always to choose whatever is poorer or more fitting for a poor person. No one should ever use anything as his own, nor lend or receive anything, nor give away something belonging to the house without the Superior's permission."

¹⁰Sarzana: "No one will keep money to himself, nor place it with others. No one will have anything else without the permission of the Superior."

of property belonging to the Congregation, or pass it on to others.¹¹

4.—No one, either, should have anything which the Superior does not know about, or does not authorize, or which he is not prepared to give up at once if the Superior says so, or even hints at it.¹²

5.—No one should use anything as though it were his own personal property. No one should give away or accept anything, or exchange or lend anything, or go looking elsewhere for something, without the Superior's permission.¹³

6.—No one should take for himself what has been allotted to others or set aside for community use or abandoned. This goes for books as well. He should not pass on to someone else what has been assigned for his own use, without the Superior's permission. Nor should he allow such things to deteriorate or get damaged through his own negligence.¹⁴

7.—No one should go in for useless or exotic things. Each one, too, should keep his needs within moderate limits, and curb his hankering after such things, so that his life style as regards food, room, and bedding is that of a poor person. And in this connection, and with regard to everything else for that matter, he should be prepared to put up with even the worst facilities in the house, willing to feel the bite of poverty in his life.¹⁵

8.—And so that nothing which smacks of ownership to even the slightest degree may be seen among us, our rooms are not to be locked in such a way that they cannot be opened from the outside. And we should not have a safe in our rooms, or anything else locked with a private key, without the Superior's express permission.¹⁶

9.—No one moving from one house to another is to take anything with him, without the Superior's permission.

¹¹Sarzana: "No one will have any books without permission. If he does receive the use of any, he will not write anything in them nor make any notes."

¹²Sarzana: "No one will take as his own what is for the use of others. Likewise, he will not accept anything from non-confreres either for himself or for others without the permission of the Superior."

¹³Sarzana incorporates this paragraph into paragraph 1.

¹⁴This paragraph does not appear.

¹⁵This paragraph does not appear.

¹⁶Sarzana: "Our rooms should never be locked; neither should there be a strongbox in them, nor anything else locked, without the Superior's permission."

10.—The virtue of poverty can be infringed by even the undisciplined craving for personal belongings. For this reason each one should take particular care that this failing does not get a grip on him; and this includes wanting benefices, as being of spiritual value. No one, therefore, should covet any benefice or honor in the Church, under any pretext whatsoever.¹⁷

CHAPTER IV.—CHASTITY

1.—Our Savior showed clearly how highly He rated chastity, and how anxious He was to get people to accept it, by the fact that He wanted to be born of an Immaculate Virgin through the intervention of the Holy Spirit, outside the normal course of nature. Christ allowed Himself to be accused of the most appalling charges, following His wish to be overwhelmed with disgrace. Yet He loathed unchastity so much that we never read of His having been in even the slightest way suspected of it, much less accused of it, even by His most determined opponents. For this reason it is very important for the Congregation to be strongly determined to possess this virtue. And we must always and everywhere uphold it in a clear and decisive way. This should be more obviously our practice since mission ministry almost all the time brings us into contact with lay men and women. Everyone, therefore, should be careful to take advantage to the best of his ability of every safeguard and precaution for keeping this chastity of body and mind intact.

2.—In order to succeed in this, with the help of God, we should be very careful to control internal and external senses. We are never to speak to women in a one-to-one situation in unbecoming circumstances of either time or place. When speaking or writing to them we should completely avoid using any words, even spiritual terminology, which smack of affectionate feelings toward them. When hearing their confessions, or when speaking to them outside of con-

¹⁷Sarzana: "No one will aspire after any benefice nor ever solicit any dignity or office, whether in or out of the Congregation."

fession, we should not go too close to them nor take our chastity for granted.

3.—And since intemperance is, so to speak, the nursing mother of unchastity, each one should be moderate with regard to eating. We should, as far as possible, use ordinary food, and wine diluted with plenty of water.¹⁸

4.—Moreover, each of us needs to convince himself that it is not enough for Missioners to have reached an above-average level in this virtue. We must also try with every means available to prevent anyone from having even the slightest suspicion of the opposite vice in any member of our Community. The mere suspicion of this, even though completely unfounded, would do more damage to the Congregation and its good work than the false accusation of any other wrongdoing, especially since it would result in our missions doing little or no good. Because of this we should use not merely every available ordinary means but even exceptional ones where necessary to prevent or remove this evil. For example, we should at times withdraw from some works, which in other respects are permissible and even good and holy, when in the judgment of the Superior or Director they seem to give reason for fearing such suspicion.¹⁹

5.—And since a lazy life is the enemy of virtues, especially of chastity, each of us is to avoid being idle and should always make good use of his time.²⁰

CHAPTER V.—OBEDIENCE

1.—Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us obedience by word and example. He wished to be submissive to the Most Blessed Virgin, Saint Joseph, and other people in positions of authority, whether good or disagreeable. For this reason we should be completely obedient to every one of our Superiors, seeing the Lord in them and them in the

¹⁸With some slight verbal changes, Sarzana reads paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 together in one unit.

¹⁹Sarzana: The final sentence reads: "For example, if it seems good in the Lord, we should withdraw not only from licit but even from pious and holy works."

²⁰Sarzana: This paragraph does not appear.

Lord. In the first place we should faithfully and sincerely reverence and obey our Holy Father the Pope. We should also humbly and consistently obey the most reverend Bishops of the dioceses where the Congregation has houses.²¹ Furthermore we should not take on anything in parish churches without the approval of the parish priests.

2.—Every one of the confreres should also obey the Superior General promptly, without complaining, and unwaveringly in all matters not obviously sinful. This obedience is, to some extent, blind. It implies giving up our own opinion and wishes, not only with regard to what he specifically tells us but even with regard to his intention, since we believe that what he asks us to do is always for the best. We should always leave ourselves open to what he wants, like a file in the hands of a carpenter.

3.—We are also to obey, in the same way, other Superiors, whether local or provincial, as well as lesser office-holders. Each one should also try to answer the call of the bell as Christ's voice, going so far as even to leave a letter unfinished as soon as the bell starts ringing.²²

4.—The Congregation wants to develop its commitment to this virtue quickly and smoothly. It should therefore try, as best it can, to see to it that the good practice of neither asking for, nor refusing, anything is always kept up among us. Of course when someone knows that something does not agree with him, or that he needs something, he should think about it in the presence of the Lord and make up his mind whether or not to tell the Superior about it, without worrying about which way his answer will go. In this frame of mind he should put the matter to the Superior. He should be con-

²¹Sarzana: The following section is inserted here: "and in all our duties which deal with the neighbor, according to our Rules, we will constantly show to the Bishops that we are those servants in the Gospel. As a result, we will come and go according to their wishes, and whatever they command we will observe, and we will undertake nothing in their dioceses concerning the neighbor without the Bishops' permission. As a result, we will never be able to dispense ourselves or be freed from this obedience under any pretext. Furthermore. . ."

²²Sarzana has the following paragraphs of the Rules in this order: 11, 12, 4, 7, 15, 16, 8, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14. Further, the following appears as the last paragraph: "No one will hear the confessions of our own confreres or of others, unless he has been assigned to do so by the Superior General, the Visitor, or his own Superior."

vinced that the Superior's response indicates God's Will for him, and when he receives his answer he should accept it as God's Will.

5.—Each week there is to be a meeting, with the day, time, and place agreed, at which all can hear the Superior's arrangements for the running of the house and put to him any suggestions they may have.

6.—No one is to order anyone else to do something, or to reprove anyone, unless the Superior has asked him to do so or he already has the duty to do so because of his work.

7.—When someone gets a refusal from one Superior he must not go to another Superior about the same matter without mentioning the refusal and the reason for it.

8.—No one is to abandon any work he has been given, even if impeded by other business that needs to be done, without telling one of the Superiors in time, so that someone else can be appointed, if necessary.

9.—No one is to meddle in anyone else's work or ministry. But if asked to help out, especially by someone in charge of something, no matter how minor, he should readily do so, if possible. If the work, however, would take a lot of time, this is not to be done, without the Superior's permission.²³

10.—No one is to go into anyone else's place of work without the Superior's permission. If there is some need to do so, however, permission from the confrere in charge of the place is enough.

11.—Letters can cause many problems, and not just minor ones. Because of this, no one is to write, send, or open letters without the Superior's permission. When a letter is written it should be submitted to the Superior, and it will be up to him whether to send it or not.²⁴

12.—Obedience should contribute to physical health. For this reason no one is to eat or drink outside the usual times, without the Superior's permission.²⁵

²³Sarzana contains only the first sentence.

²⁴Sarzana does not contain the first sentence.

²⁵Sarzana does not contain the first sentence.

13.—Without the general or special permission of the Superior, no one is to go into anyone else's room, or open the door until he has heard "Come in," and while the two of them are together the door should be left open.

14.—Without the permission of the same Superior, no one is to bring anyone else, especially anyone not a member of the Congregation, into his room.

15.—No one is to write, translate, or publish a book without the explicit approval and permission of the Superior General.

16.—None of our lay Brothers should want to study Latin or wish to become clerics. Their role is that of Martha. If any of them feel such an inclination, they should try to get rid of it at once as something suggested by the evil spirit, who perhaps is aiming at their ruin by disguising pride as zeal. They also need the Superior General's explicit permission to learn reading and writing.²⁶

CHAPTER VI.—MATTERS CONCERNING THE SICK

1.—One of the principal things Christ did was to visit and care for the sick, and especially persons who were poor. He very often recommended this to those He was sending into His vineyard. For this reason the Congregation should have a special care for helping and visiting the sick, whether outside or inside the house. We should help them physically and spiritually, as far as is practical, especially on missions. As well as this we should pay particular attention to setting up and visiting the Confraternity of Charity.

2.—Wherever we visit a sick person, inside or outside the house, we should look on this person as Christ rather than as just a human being, since Christ said that He regarded any service done to such a person as being done to Himself. For this reason on such occasions we should be considerate and speak in a low voice. And what we

²⁶Sarzana: "None of our lay Brothers should want to study Latin. If any of them feel such an inclination, . . ."

say ought to console the sick person, put him in good humor, and help anyone else who is there.

3.—Members of our own Community who are sick should remind themselves that they are not kept in bed, or in the hospital, just to be nursed and brought back to health by medical help. They are also there, as if in a pulpit, to witness publicly to Christian virtues, especially patience and acceptance of the Divine Will, at least by their example. In this way they can make Christ present to those looking after them and to visitors. And through their sickness they themselves can grow in virtue. Obedience is one of the virtues most needed in the sick. They should be completely obedient to doctors and chaplains, as well as to the nurse and anyone else involved in their care.

4.—To prevent any abuse creeping in, in connection with the sick, all who feel unwell should notify the Superior, the person in charge of health, or the nurse. No one is to take any medicine, call in our doctor, or consult another one, without the Superior's permission.

CHAPTER VII.—DECORUM

1.—Decorum was such a feature of the appearance, activity, and speech of Christ the Lord that He drew many thousands of people to follow Him, even out into the desert. There they were pleased to be with Him and to listen to the words of eternal life which He taught. They even forgot about the need for food and drink. Missioners should imitate this attractive characteristic of such a great teacher. Since we are obliged by our Institute to deal frequently with the neighbor, we should always fear lest the slightest impropriety on our part, in giving bad example, destroy that which we have built up in the Lord by our work and ministry. For this reason all should carefully carry out what Saint Paul recommended to the first Christians. *Let your modesty be known to all.* In order to be capable of living up to this, we should be careful to put into practice the special

Rules dealing with decorum drawn up for the Congregation, especially the following:

2.—First of all, we should keep our eyes from all undisciplined roving, especially in church, at table, and in public. We should see to it that there is nothing undignified or childish in our behavior, and nothing affected or mundane in our bearing.²⁷

3.—All should be careful not to touch one another, even in fun, apart from when it is normal to embrace as a sign of friendship or in greeting, for example when someone is leaving on a journey or just back from one, or has just joined the Congregation.

4.—Each one should make an effort to keep neat and clean, especially as regards clothes, completely avoiding, though, anything which is too elegant or stylish.

5.—Each one is to keep clean, and to look after, the modest furniture in his room, minimal though it may be. He should sweep his room every three days. In the morning, when he gets up, he should make his bed properly. In exceptional circumstances due to illness or work, someone else may be appointed to do this by the Superior.

6.—No one should come out of his room without being properly dressed.

7.—So that we can more easily and readily witness to decorum when others are present, each one, when at home, even alone in his room, should pay particular attention to behaving with modesty, realizing that God is present. We should be especially careful not to sleep at night with nothing on or with insufficient bedclothes.²⁸

CHAPTER VIII.—GETTING ALONG WITH EACH OTHER

1.—Christ our Savior formed Apostles and disciples into a community and gave them guidelines for getting along with each other.

²⁷Sarzana places the subsequent paragraphs in the following order: 6, 7, 3, 4, 5. After paragraph three, the following appears: "All who enter or leave the house should be careful not to ring the bell too much or too repeatedly."

²⁸Sarzana: "No one will sleep at night with nothing on, with insufficient bedclothes, or with the window open."

Here are some of them: love one another; wash each other's feet; seek reconciliation with a companion immediately after a disagreement; travel in pairs; and finally, anyone who wants to be the more prominent should keep in the background. There were other similar ones. Now our little Congregation wants to follow in the footsteps of Christ and the disciples, so it also should have the following regulations which concern good community living and communicating among us, and each of us should try our best to keep them.

2.—Love, like that between brothers, should always be present among us, as well as the bond of holiness, and these should be safeguarded in every possible way. For this reason there should be great mutual respect, and we should get along as good friends, always living in community. We should particularly avoid exclusive friendships, as well as any sort of ostracism, as experience has shown that these give rise to factions and destroy Congregations.²⁹

3.—All should show the special respect due to Superiors by uncovering their head to them. We should be careful not to interrupt them while they are speaking or, even more reprehensible, contradict them. All should also uncover their head to priests, and seminarists and students to their Directors and professors. The priests should even try, in the Lord, to anticipate one another in showing this mutual respect. During meals, though, this gesture is to be made only to the Superior or an important visitor. This is to prevent the roving eye and wandering mind.

4.—Scripture tells us that there is a time for speaking and a time for keeping silent, and that in excessive talking sin is not lacking. And there is plenty of evidence from everyday experience that the good work of any Community dedicated to God is unlikely to last long if it has no guidelines about speaking and no provision for silence. We should keep silent, then, except during recreation. At other times no one should speak unnecessarily, apart from a brief passing remark in a low voice. This applies especially in the church, sacristy, sleeping quarters, and dining room, and particularly during meals. If someone at table, though, needs something, the person

²⁹Sarzana arranges the subsequent paragraphs as follows: 9, 3, 15-16, 14, 11, 13, 12, 10, 4b, 8, 5, 6.

beside him should tell whoever is on duty, with a single word if a nod or other sign would not do. But no matter when we are speaking, even during recreation, we should avoid excessive argument and too loud a voice, since this could give bad example among ourselves or to visitors.³⁰

5.—Unless we have the Superior's permission, none of us should speak to the seminarists or students, or to others, even priests, who are less than two years out of the Internal Seminary. Charity, though, may call for a brief passing greeting.

6.—When anyone is in his own room, or is going around the house, especially at night, he should, as far as possible, avoid making noise, particularly when opening or closing doors. This will help in maintaining silence.

7.—During recreation, and in other everyday matters, we should aim at not letting good humor get out of control, mixing the useful with the agreeable. In this way we give good example to all. We will more readily achieve this if our conversation is usually about spirituality or theology for a Missioner.³¹

8.—When together like this, and at other customary meetings which take place from time to time, we should try to bring up for discussion, among other topics of conversation, mainly those which help our commitment to our vocation or our growth in holiness. Thus we might, for example, encourage devotion, mortification, obedience, or humility. Or another time we might, gently and with humility, defend them against people who belittle them. But if we dislike any of these virtues, we should make this fact known only to the Superior or Director, and take care not to reveal it to others either publicly or privately.³²

³⁰Sarzana begins the paragraph thus: "We should keep silent, then." It concludes thus: "But no matter when, all will strive to speak in a low voice."

³¹This paragraph does not appear.

³²Sarzana: "In our conversations, we will invite each other to love our vocation and desire our own perfection. We will always praise virtue and mortification, and defend them with humility and gentleness against those who belittle them. But if we dislike any of these, we should make this fact known to the Superior or Director, and take care especially never to reveal it to the others, either publicly or privately."

9.—We should take great care to avoid being in any way stubborn or argumentative in conversation, even if only in fun. We should even try, in the Lord, to prefer, as far as possible, other people's opinions to our own on all matters where freedom of opinion is allowed.³³ If someone, though, holds an opposite view to that expressed about something, he can put forward his point of view calmly and with humility. Above all, though, everyone in conversation should try to avoid anger or bad temper, or showing he is annoyed with someone, and no one should hurt another in word or deed, or in any other way.

10.—Everyone must consider it a matter of prime obligation to maintain confidentiality, not only about matters of confession or direction, but also about what is said or done at Chapter with regard to faults and penances. This also applies to other matters when we know confidentiality is requested by the Superiors or is demanded by the nature of the case.³⁴

11.—No one should damage the reputation of others, especially Superiors, in even the slightest way, or grumble about them, or criticize what is done or said in our Congregation or in other Communities.

12.—No one is to snoop around, prying into how the house is run, or discuss this with others, or criticize explicitly or implicitly the Rules or Constitutions of the Congregation or even its respected customs.

13.—No one should grumble about food, clothing, or sleeping accommodation, or even discuss them unless his assigned work calls for this.

14.—No one should speak deprecatingly about other countries or provinces, as this usually causes no small trouble.

³³Sarzana: "We should diligently avoid being argumentative in conversation, even if only in fun. Instead, we will declare that we understand and agree with the others, and we will prefer the opinion of others where freedom of opinion is allowed."

³⁴Sarzana: "Everyone . . . confidentiality about what is said at chapter with regard to faults and penances." Sarzana also has the following paragraph: "The list which contains various items for conversations and topics to be discussed in our recreations and conversations will always be available, as much as possible."

15.—Disagreements and wars can take place between Christian rulers, and on such occasions no one should reveal a preference for either side. This is following the example of Christ, who did not want to adjudicate in a quarrel between brothers or decide about the rights of rulers. All He said was to give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and so forth.

16.—Each one should keep well away from discussions about national or international affairs and other political matters, especially with regard to war and current disputes between rulers and other similar rumors in the world. And each one should take care, as far as possible, not to write anything about all this.³⁵

CHAPTER IX.—GETTING ALONG WITH NON-CONFRERES

1.—Besides the guidelines which our Savior gave His Apostles and disciples about getting along with one another, He also gave certain instructions about how to behave toward other people, toward the Scribes and Pharisees and the authorities when brought before their synagogues and courts, how to behave when invited to meals, and so on. Modeling ourselves on Him, then, it is right for us to have some guidelines for our behavior toward non-confreres, and we should try to live up to them.

2.—By the very nature of our Congregation we are bound to come into frequent contact with lay people, especially on missions, but we should not seek such contact unless obedience or necessity calls for it. On such occasions we should keep in mind our Lord's words: *You are the light of the world*. We should take the sun's light as an example; it gives both light and warmth, and is undiminished even when it beams on what is not clean.

3.—St. Paul wrote: *No one in God's army gets involved in secular affairs*. Following this advice we should take great care not to be implicated in other people's lawsuits, nor to be executors of wills or involved in matrimonial or business negotiations or anything like that.³⁶

³⁵Sarzana combines paragraphs 15 and 16, with some small alterations.

³⁶Sarzana arranges the subsequent paragraphs in the following order: 5, 6, 4, 11, 12, 13, 14, 7, 8, 15, 16.

4.—No one should take on the administration of even religious business matters, or promise his help in dealing with them, or hint that he is available for them, without the Superior's permission.

5.—When at home in the house, no one should make himself available to strike up a conversation with strangers or become involved in getting another confrere for this purpose, unless the Superior advises otherwise.

6.—No one should invite non-confreres to a meal, without the Superior's permission.

7.—No one should deliver messages, letters, or anything else in either direction between confreres and others, without the Superior's permission.

8.—No one should show our Rules or Constitutions to non-confreres without the explicit permission of the Superior General or the Provincial. These Common Rules, though, may be shown to aspirants during a retreat, with the permission of the local Superior, and sometimes earlier on if he thinks it would be useful in the Lord.

9.—No one should irresponsibly or pointlessly mention to non-confreres what has been, or is going to be, done in the house, nor should we discuss with them any matters which are not allowed in our own conversation, especially concerning the state or kingdom.³⁷

10.—When anyone is authorized to meet non-confreres, he should speak to them only about what needs to be said, or what can promote the salvation and spiritual development of either party, or of both, and with a sense of what is serious, religious, and moderate, according to circumstances of persons, places and times.³⁸

11.—When anyone goes out of the house, he is to follow the Superior's wishes as regards manner, time, and companions; it is for the Superior or his delegate to designate a companion. The person designated as a companion should defer to the other and be a willing listener.

12.—When anyone asks permission from the Superior to go somewhere, he should explain where he wants to go, and why, and as soon as he gets back report to him what he did.

³⁷Sarzana: This paragraph does not appear.

³⁸Sarzana: This paragraph does not appear.

13.—Everyone should use the usual door for leaving or entering the house, unless either necessity or the Superior's permission allows otherwise.

14.—When leaving the house, even when it is allowed to go and come by the back door or through the church, we are to mark ourselves "out" and let the doorkeeper know when we will be back so that he can inform callers. We should not go out in the morning before daylight, and should be back before nightfall, and, as soon as we get back, mark ourselves "in."

15.—Except while traveling, no one is to eat while out of the house, without the Superior's permission.³⁹

16.—If, while traveling, anyone passes through a place where the Congregation has a house, he should stay in that house rather than anywhere else. While in that house, he is to be answerable to whoever is in charge and should not do anything while there without his advice and direction. This also applies to someone coming to such a house on business.⁴⁰

CHAPTER X.—SPIRITUAL PRACTICES USED IN THE CONGREGATION

1.—Christ the Lord and His disciples had their spiritual practices, such as going to the temple on certain days, sometimes going off by themselves for a while, giving time to praying, and other such practices. It makes sense, then, for this little Congregation to have its own spiritual practices. It should prefer conscientious fidelity to these rather than to any others, unless necessity or obedience rules this out. Moreover, these spiritual practices help us more effectively to keep the other Rules or Constitutions and to grow in holiness.

2.—According to the Bull which established our Congregation, we are bound to honor in a special way the Most Holy Trinity and

³⁹Sarzana: Except while traveling, no one is to eat or drink . . . "

⁴⁰Sarzana: "If, while traveling, . . . anywhere else. He is to be subject in obedience while there to the Superior. Likewise, anyone who goes there on business will do nothing without the advice and direction of the Superior or Visitor if he is there for some time. Also, the Superior of the other house will retain his responsibility over the companion which the confrere has brought with him to the house, in what pertains to confession and direction."

the Incarnation, mysteries beyond words. We should therefore try to carry this out most faithfully and, if possible, in every way, but especially in these three ways: (1) frequently honoring these mysteries by a prayer of faith and adoration, coming from our inmost heart; (2) dedicating certain prayers and good works each day to their honor and, above all, celebrating their feast days with special dignity, and the greatest possible personal devotion; (3) trying constantly, by our teaching and example, to get other people to know these mysteries and to honor and worship them.⁴¹

3.—There can be no better way of paying the best honor possible to these mysteries than proper devotion to, and use of, the Blessed Eucharist, sacrament and sacrifice. It includes, as it were, all the other mysteries of faith and, by itself, leads those who receive Communion respectfully or celebrate Mass properly, to holiness and ultimately to everlasting glory. In this way God, Unity and Trinity, and the Incarnate Word, are paid the greatest honor. For these reasons, nothing should be more important to us than showing due honor to this sacrament and sacrifice. We are also to make a great effort to get everyone else to pay it similar honor and reverence. We should try, to the best of our ability, to achieve this by preventing, as far as we can, any lack of reverence in word or act, and by carefully teaching others what to believe about so great a mystery, and how they should honor it.⁴²

⁴¹Sarzana: "According to the Bull of our institution we are to venerate the Most Holy Trinity, the mystery of the Incarnation, and the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with special worship; the Congregation will fulfill this most faithfully, at least in the following three ways: (1) by celebrating with special dignity and the greatest possible personal devotion the feasts of the Most Holy Trinity, the Incarnation of the Lord, and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary; (2) besides the worship which each one should manifest publicly, by assisting with special attention at the acts of adoration and praise, both in Mass and the Divine Office, as well as in common daily prayers, which are specially directed to honor them; (3) by striving with all our strength to inculcate knowledge, honor, and veneration of them in the minds of the people, wherever we can, by our instructions and example."

⁴²Sarzana: "Since the most holy sacrament of the altar contains in itself, as it were, the sum of all the mysteries of our faith, and since in some respects our salvation and the entire good of the Church depend on the worship rightly given to it, the Congregation will profess special and timeless honor to it. Nothing will be more important for us than attentively and tirelessly to see that all give due honor and reverence to this sacrament. The following are among the ways by which it is customary to render honor."

4.—Because this Bull also expressly recommends it, and for other reasons as well, we should likewise have special devotion to the Most Blessed Virgin Mary. Confreres, therefore, both individually and collectively, should, with God's help, try to carry this out perfectly: (1) by specially honoring every day this preeminent Mother of Christ, who is also our Mother; (2) by putting into practice, as far as possible, the same virtues as she did, particularly humility and chastity; (3) by enthusiastically encouraging others, whenever opportunity and means permit, to show her the greatest reverence and always to serve her loyally.⁴³

5.—We should take the greatest care to pray the Divine Office properly. We pray it in the Roman rite and in common, in a middle tone of voice, even when on missions. We do not sing it so as to leave more time for helping others. Exceptions to this would be houses where we are bound to Gregorian Chant because of obligations accepted, or students preparing to receive orders, or seminaries for diocesan students, and other suchlike commitments. No matter in what place or at what time we pray the canonical hours, we should remember the reverence, attention, and devotion with which we should do so, since we know for certain that we are at that moment praising God in our celebration, and therefore sharing in the role of angels.⁴⁴

6.—One of the most important ministries on our missions is to encourage people to receive the sacraments of penance and Eucharist frequently. It is right, then, that we ourselves should, with greater reason, give good example to them in this matter, or even far more than just good example. We should therefore aim at giving good example in the most perfect way possible. And since everything should be done in an orderly way, the priests are to go to confession twice a week, or at least once, to one of the confessors appointed for the house, and not to anyone else, without the Superior's permission. They are to celebrate Mass every day unless

⁴³Sarzana: This paragraph does not appear. The subsequent paragraphs appear in this order: 10, 9, 7, 5, 8, 12, 13, 16, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20. Paragraphs 10 and 11 were combined.

⁴⁴Sarzana: "All will recite the Divine Office in common, generally even during missions, in a middle tone of voice. Only those places are excepted where, because of foundations or other need, we are obliged to the Gregorian Chant."

something prevents this. Those who are not priests, though, are to go to confession every Saturday and on the eves of the main feast days, to one of the above-mentioned confessors, unless the Superior has appointed someone else, and they are to receive Communion, with the advice of their Director, every Sunday and on the above-mentioned feast days, and are to go to Mass every day.⁴⁵

7.—Christ the Lord in addition to His daytime meditations, sometimes used to spend the whole night in prayer to God. We cannot fully follow His example in this, though we should try to do so while making allowance for our weakness. All the confreres, therefore, should conscientiously spend one hour a day in mental prayer, and the custom of the Congregation is that this is to be done together and in the assigned place.

8.—Each one should see to it that he does not let a day pass without reading from some spiritual book suited to his own needs, spending at this whatever length of time the Superior or Director indicates. As well as this, the priests and all the students are to read a chapter of the New Testament, reverencing this book as the norm of Christian holiness. For greater benefit this reading should be done kneeling, with head uncovered, and praying, at least at the end, on these three themes: (1) reverence for the truths contained in the chapter; (2) desire to have the same spirit in which Christ or the saints taught them; (3) determination to put into practice the advice or commands contained in it, as well as the examples of virtues.

9.—All of us are to make two sorts of examination of conscience every day so as to have a clearer understanding of our failings and, by doing so, to make up for them with God's help and to sharpen our sensitivity in this matter. One is to be made briefly before the midday and evening meals, focusing on some virtue to be acquired or on some failing to be overcome. The other is a general review of all the day's activity and is to be done shortly before going to bed.⁴⁶

⁴⁵The following lines do not appear: "One of the most important ministries . . . be done in an orderly way."

⁴⁶Sarzana: "All of us are to make two sorts of examination of conscience every day. One, the particular, is to be made before the midday and evening meals, focusing on some virtue to be acquired; and the other, the general, is to be made in the evening on all the actions of the day."

10.—So that we may show reverence for Christ's withdrawal from the crowds, especially the forty days which He spent out in the desert, all those entering the Congregation, clerical and lay, are to make a retreat and a general confession of their whole lives up to then, to a priest designated by the Superior. Those already members are to make a similar retreat, with a general confession covering the period since their last one. The seminarists are to do both every six months and the others once a year.⁴⁷

11.—It is hardly possible to make progress in the spiritual life without the help of a spiritual director. So, unless a directee sometimes talks about the state of his interior life to his personal director, as he should, it is extremely difficult for him to reach a level of holiness appropriate for him. Each one of us, therefore, should with complete openness and due reverence give an account of his conscience to the Superior, or someone assigned by him, in the manner customary in the Congregation. We should do this every three months, especially when on retreat, and as often as the Superior thinks necessary.

12.—Everyone is to be particularly conscientious about being present at the spiritual conferences which we have once a week. These should usually cover topics like yielding in our own personal wishes and opinions, the practice of following God's Will in everything, getting along well together like brothers, zeal for personal holiness, and progress in other virtues, especially those which make up the spirit of the mission.

13.—So that we in our weakness can to some extent imitate Christ's self-humiliation and His willingness to be ranked with sinners, each one every Friday in the presence of the others is to acknowledge his failings to the Superior or to someone replacing him. This applies both at home and on missions. We should take in good part whatever corrections and penances are given. The brotherly custom of asking in Chapter to be publicly admonished about our fail-

⁴⁷Sarzana: Paragraph 10 concludes with the following, which now appears in paragraph 11: "at which time each one will give an account of his conscience in the manner customary in the Congregation. We will also do this every three months, and as often as the Superior thinks necessary."

ings is to be kept up, and each one therefore should take great care to give this type of admonition in a spirit of charity and humility.⁴⁸

14.—As well as this, we should make an effort to accept uncomplainingly whatever humiliations come our way, even apart from Chapter or, for that matter, at any time. In this way we deepen more quickly a willing acceptance of the experience of rejection, and accordingly advance more and more along the path to holiness. When, therefore, at the end of mental prayer or a conference, the Superior indicates to someone that he wishes to point out to him some failing, the person concerned should kneel down at once, listen to the admonition willingly, in a spirit of humility, and without comment, accept any penance given, and faithfully do it.⁴⁹

15.—The continuous work of the Missioners is such that we cannot be obliged by any rule to undertake severe physical mortifications and austerities. In spite of this, though, each one should value them highly and always have a leaning toward them and even, health and important work permitting, make use of them. We have as example Christ and the early Christians, and even many lay people conscious of the need for penance. No one, though, should take on any such penances without consulting the Superior or Director, unless they are imposed in confession.

16.—Every Friday each one is to be satisfied with only one course at the evening meal, a course of vegetables of either leaf or bean variety. This does not apply on missions or while traveling.

17.—On the Monday and Tuesday before Ash Wednesday we are to abstain from meat if at home, honoring God by this minimal self-discipline at a time when many Christians seriously offend Him by their licentiousness and gluttony.

18.—Moreover, the timetable which is customary in the Congregation is to be strictly followed by everyone, whether at home or

⁴⁸Sarzana: The following does not appear: "So that we . . . ranked with sinners."

⁴⁹Sarzana: The following text does not appear: "As well as this . . . along the path to holiness." In addition, the following paragraph appears in Sarzana: "Each one will have, for the entire time of his life, the intention of applying himself to the exercises of the mission in the Congregation according to our Institute. He will do this on entering and will often renew it." The term "Institute" was used by the founder to refer to the Foundation Contract dated April 17, 1625 (cf. Doc. 59).

on missions, particularly as regards the times for getting up and going to bed, prayer, the Divine Office, and meals.

19.—There is to be spiritual reading in the dining room all through the meal, both at home and on missions, so that the mind may be nourished as well as the body.

20.—We should also keep up other worthwhile practices customary in the Congregation, such as to visit the chapel immediately before going out and after coming in, greeting Christ in the Blessed Sacrament; to catechize poor persons, especially beggars, particularly while traveling, if the opportunity occurs; to kneel down on entering and on leaving our rooms in order to invoke God before doing anything and to thank Him afterward.⁵⁰

21.—If anyone wants to take on any spiritual practices over and above those prescribed in these Rules, he ought to discuss it with the Superior or Director and should do only what they authorize with regard to them. If he were to do otherwise, he might perhaps be doing his own will, or even the devil's. Thus, as punishment for his imprudence or disobedience, he might be tricked by the devil into something with only the appearance of being worthwhile and, in the long run, do himself spiritual harm.⁵¹

CHAPTER XL.—MISSIONS AND OTHER MINISTRIES OF THE CONGREGATION ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE

1.—Our Lord Jesus Christ gave His disciples rules for giving missions. He told them to ask the Lord of the harvest to send workers to His harvest, and He indicated the peoples to go to, how to behave on the way, what houses to stay in, what to preach, what to eat and, finally, how to deal with those who did not welcome them. We want to follow in their footsteps, as far as our limitations allow, so we should be careful to live up to the following Rules, and to the ad-

⁵⁰Sarzana has a different formulation for the care of the poor: "in front of the door of the house, to prefer spiritual to a corporal alms, that is, by catechizing the poor."

⁵¹Sarzana: The final sentence of the paragraph does not appear.

vice usually given in the Congregation. These indicate the proper program and method for our missions and other ministries.⁵²

2.—Each one should try, as the occasion arises, to help people by advice and correction and to encourage them in good works. No one, though, should become anyone's director, except during retreats, on missions, in houses where we have pastoral ministry, or on other occasions when appointed by the Superior. But even in these circumstances no one is ever to give any instructions or rule of life in writing, without the Superior's permission and approval.

3.—To avoid our Missioners having Saint Paul's words justly quoted against them, *How can they preach unless they are sent?* no one is to preach in public or catechize from a pulpit without both approval from the Provincial and appointment to it by either the same Provincial or the local Superior. On missions, though, the Director of the mission may make temporary changes of preachers and catechists by substituting others when he judges in the Lord that it is necessary, and when waiting for a written answer from the Superior would cause problems. He is, however, to tell the Superior as soon as possible why he made such changes.⁵³

4.—None of us is allowed to hear confessions, either of members of the Congregation or of others, without approval by the Ordinary. To avoid any abuse, though, those who have such approval should not engage in this ministry unless they have been designated for it by the Provincial and appointed to it by the same Provincial or local Superior.

5.—Those who are going on missions are always to bring with them the mandate of the most reverend Bishops in whose dioceses the missions are being given, and should show it to the Pastor or whoever is in charge of the churches to which they are going. Before they go home at the end of the missions they should report to the Bishops on what they did, if the latter wish this. But the Superior

⁵²Sarzana: The subsequent paragraphs appear in the following order: 10, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 3. Paragraphs 4, 11, 12 do not appear in Sarzana.

⁵³Sarzana: "No one is to preach on the missions or catechize without being named to it by the provincial. The Director, however, when it seems necessary, can substitute others who are properly prepared, provided he tell the Superior as soon as possible in writing why he made such changes."

is first to be consulted so that he can indicate how this is to be done and who is to do it.⁵⁴

6.—At the beginning and end of each mission all should ask for the blessing of the Pastor or, if he is absent, of the Assistant, and they should not do anything of importance without first mentioning it to him, and be careful not to proceed with anything to which he objects.

7.—St. Paul and his co-workers used to do manual work night and day so as not to impose on the people to whom they were ministering. Following their example we are not to impose on anyone during our missions, and all our ministry is to be done gratuitously. We do not accept any money as stipend or for food. There is nothing wrong, though, in accepting an offer of furnished lodgings.⁵⁵

8.—Everyone should sincerely wish to be appointed to visiting the sick, or settling quarrels and disputes, especially on missions and even, when the situation calls for it, ask, with humility, to be appointed to this. Charity, however, should be properly regulated by obedience, so no one is to take on this sort of caring ministry, without the Superior's permission.⁵⁶

9.—Much prudence and care are called for when problems about cases of conscience from confession are discussed, in order that the person concerned may never be identified. To avoid the harm which can be caused by this no one should bring up for discussion problems arising from any case of conscience of any importance heard in confession without first consulting the Director of the mission.

10.—The name Missioners, or Priests of the Mission, clearly indicates that the work of missions is the primary and most important of all ministries to people. And we did not invent this name for ourselves, but popular usage, reflecting Divine Providence, gave it to us. For this reason the Congregation should never replace missions

⁵⁴Sarzana: The final sentence does not appear.

⁵⁵Sarzana: The paragraph begins thus: "According to the counsel which Our Lord Jesus Christ gave to His Apostles when He sent them to preach to every creature, 'As you have received freely, give freely,' and also since St. Paul. . . ."

⁵⁶Sarzana: "No one during his sick calls should work to settle quarrels and disputes unless he has the permission of the Director."

with other ministries apparently more effective. Each one, rather, should have a deep commitment to them and be always ready to go on missions when obedience calls.⁵⁷

11.—The direction of nuns could interfere quite a lot with missions and other ministries of our Congregation, so each one of us should abstain completely from directing them. No one should call on them or preach in their convents, even during missions, without previous explicit permission from at least the local Superior. And although our Congregation was appointed to direct the Daughters of Charity right from their foundation, no confrere is to take on their direction, or go to them, or even talk to them, without the same Superior's permission.

12.—Finally, confreres, individually and collectively, are to understand that the plea of missions should not mean neglect of the ministry to the clergy who are not members of our Congregation, especially ordinands and seminarians, as well as to other people on retreat, carried on in our houses. Though our preference is for missions, giving them should not mean omitting our work for the clergy whenever we are asked to do this by Bishops or Superiors. The reason is that by the nature of our Congregation we are bound almost equally to both. Also, everyday experience shows that no matter how effective these missions may be there will be no lasting effect without the help of the Pastors, to whose holiness the above-mentioned ministries contribute quite a lot. Each one should therefore give himself ungrudgingly to God in such ministry, bringing care and devotion to it. And to do this more easily and effectively we should make an effort to follow out exactly the instructions usually given by our Superiors about this.

⁵⁷Sarzana: The paragraph concludes thus: "To fulfill better this mystery of ours, the plan drawn up for missions will be religiously observed, in addition to those matters contained in this chapter."

**CHAPTER XII.—SOME USEFUL MEANS
NEEDED FOR PROPERLY AND EFFECTIVELY CARRYING OUT
THE MINISTRIES JUST MENTIONED**

1. In the beginning of these Rules or Constitutions the Congregation took Christ the Lord as a model, as someone who did not begin by teaching but by doing. In this last chapter, therefore, it is equally necessary to point out that He is a model also for doing all things well, because whatever good we may do deserves blame rather than praise if it is not done well. For this reason it is right to add these few guidelines and means helpful for properly carrying out the ministries just mentioned. All our Missioners should make a real effort to put them into practice.⁵⁸

2. Each one, in every single thing he does, especially in preaching or other ministries of the Congregation, should make an effort to have, to the best of his ability, as pure an intention as possible of pleasing God alone. We should renew this intention many times, particularly as we begin more important activities. We should be careful above all not to indulge any wish for human approval or self-gratification. Such a wish can infect or spoil the holiest action, as Christ taught it: *If your eye is evil your whole body will be full of darkness.*

3.—St. Paul says that it can sometimes happen that though we begin in the Spirit we end up in the unspiritual. This usually happens when our activity leads to a certain foolish self-congratulation which we are stupid enough to feed on if it went off well with people praising us. Or it can happen when we feel so downhearted and distressed that we cannot in any way find peace, if our activity has not gone well. We should, therefore, take every care never to fall into either of these faults. In order to counteract the first we should keep in mind this truth, that all the glory is to be given to God and nothing to ourselves but embarrassment. On top of this, if we were vainly gratified with that sort of praise, we should be very much afraid of hearing these words of Christ: *I tell you, you have received your reward.* The cure for the second is this: to turn at once to genuine hu-

⁵⁸Sarzana: A special heading for chapter XII does not appear. Further, paragraph 1 does not appear. The subsequent paragraphs follow this order: 5, 7, 4, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14.

mility and the willing acceptance of the experience of rejection, which is what God asks of us in such circumstances. After that, to reflect carefully on the fact that very often we can hope for as much glory for God's name and usefulness for others from this type of disappointment, patiently put up with, as from sermons which please people and are apparently beneficial.

4.—Since these two evils, foolish self-congratulation and disproportionate disappointment, which corrupt preachers, usually stem from praise on the one hand and criticism on the other about this type of public activity, no one should praise any confrere, especially in his presence, for exceptional natural gifts or talents, above all with regard to eloquent sermons which have attracted public attention. On the other hand, no one should unfavorably criticize anyone for lack of eloquence or knowledge or any similar shortcomings noticed in his preaching. But if anyone needs a bit of encouragement to boost his lack of confidence, or a warning to curb his itching vanity, it is up to the Superior to give it, or to delegate someone to do so, with prudence and in private. It is not wrong, though, to praise others for acts of humility, mortification, simplicity, or other such virtues, even with regard to preaching, provided that this is done in their absence, with restraint and discernment, and with God in mind.⁵⁹

5.—As simplicity is the principal and most characteristic virtue of Missioners, we should show it at all times and in all circumstances. We should be more careful to practice it during missions, especially when we proclaim the Word of God to country people, to whom, because they are simple, God speaks through us. For this reason our style of peaching and catechizing should be simple and suited to the people, and in line with the simple method the Congregation has used up to now. Each one, therefore, is to avoid com-

⁵⁹Sarzana: "Since human recognition is often the cause of intellectual pride, no one should praise any confreres because of their preaching or catechizing, or because they carry on external works amid human applause. Yet they can be prudently commended, in their absence, for their humility, mortification and other virtues." Sarzana also has the following paragraph: "All will take diligent care not to censure or condemn the sermons of others, nor other public activities. If it is necessary to warn someone about these, it belongs to the Superior to do so, or to depute someone else. He will do so in private and with due moderation."

pletely speaking with too much tenderness or with affection. We should take care not to preach any far-fetched or too subtly contrived ideas, or pointless distinctions, from the pulpit of truth. We should remember that Christ the Lord and His disciples made use of a simple way of speaking and, because of this, reaped a much better harvest with a most abundant yield.⁶⁰

6.—Those who are appointed to seminaries for students not of our Congregation, to direction of ordinands, to conferences with Pastors and other clergy, and similar ministries should also use this simple, ordinary way of speaking. And they should take special care, by word and example, to urge all those to whom they minister to develop their spiritual lives as well as their learning. Our Missioners should try especially to behave with great humility, gentleness, respect, and cordiality toward them. Those who are giving retreats should, as far as possible, do the same.⁶¹

7.—Since novel or merely personal opinions usually harm both their originators and their followers, all confreres should be careful to avoid such novelties and personal opinions. In fact, we should always be in agreement, as far as possible, on doctrine and in what we say and write so that we can, as Saint Paul says, *be united in spirit and ideals*, and even in speech.⁶²

8.—Saint Zeno says, *Curiosity makes a person guilty, not learned*,⁶³ and Saint Paul says: Learning puffs up. This is especially so when his other advice is overlooked: *Not to think more highly of oneself than one ought, but to estimate oneself soberly*. All of us, therefore, but especially the students, should always be alert in case undisciplined craving for learning insidiously invades our heart. We are not, though, to neglect the dedicated study which is needed for the proper carrying out of the work of a Missioner, as long as our primary aim is to acquire the learning of the saints, which is taught in the school of the cross, so that we may preach only Jesus Christ,

⁶⁰Sarzana: The following text does not appear: "As simplicity. . . ."

⁶¹Sarzana: The text "should also use this simple, ordinary way of speaking. And they should . . ." does not appear.

⁶²Sarzana: The text "Since novel . . . and their followers" does not appear.

⁶³From a sermon of Zeno of Verona in PL 11:398. It is not known how Vincent became acquainted with this citation, the only one in the Rules not taken from the Bible.

following the example of Saint Paul, who also admitted frankly, when writing to the Corinthians, that he had decided that, when among them, he would speak of nothing except Jesus Christ, and of Him crucified.⁶⁴

9.—Of all the guidelines in the Gospel needed by those who work in the Lord's vineyard, this is the one that should appeal most to us: *Whoever wishes to be the greatest among you, let him be like the least and the servant of the others.* For, the moment the Congregation gives up following this advice, with uncurbed ambition taking over, it will be completely ruined. It is because this desire, slipping easily into minds which by nature are inclined toward ambition, urges them on to many evils. In particular it urges them to hope for appointments of distinction, to envy those who receive them, or to congratulate themselves if they have received such appointments. And so, lured on and deluded by the false glamor of superficial fame, which is the only thing they set their eyes on, they do not notice the nearby cliff and end up disastrously by falling over it. That is why it should be a prime concern of ours to get away from the monstrosity of pride. But if it already has a place in our hearts, then a suitable way to get rid of it immediately, following the Lord's advice already quoted, would be to try, through genuine humility, to have a less inflated opinion of ourselves and to want always to have the lowest place. If it should happen that we notice traces of foolish self-congratulation in ourselves because of the prominent duties or works we carry out, the remedy is to ask the Superior immediately, though with respect for his authority, to relieve us of these duties and to appoint us to some unremarkable work of his choice.⁶⁵

⁶⁴Sarzana: The following text does not appear: "as long as our primary aim . . . and of Him crucified."

⁶⁵Sarzana: The following text appears after "by falling over it.": "Hence, when this nascent monster is encountered, each and every one will employ whatever means they can think of. The first of these is to become more humble in our own estimation by making an act of deep humility. Second, to seek the lowest place. Third, to request from God and the Superior that we be removed from our superior position, even from the duty of preaching or of leading others, by which we might have seemed to be someone special. Instead, the Superior could assign us to some lowly position on the mission according to his pleasure."

10.—All of us should as well make a particular effort to repress the first feelings of envy which can arise when the reputation, public estimation, and prominent works of other Congregations are better than ours. We must definitely convince ourselves that it does not matter by whom Christ is preached, as long as He is preached, and that as much—sometimes even more—grace and merit come to us when we are pleased at other people's good work as would come if we had done it ourselves with self-congratulation or from a less worthy motive. For this reason everyone should try to have Moses' way of thinking. When He was asked to stop some people from prophesying, He retorted: *Would that all the people were prophets. Would that the Lord might bestow His Spirit on them all.* As well as this we should think of other Congregations as being far worthier than our own, though we should have greater affection for ours, just as a well-brought-up child will have far greater love for his own mother, poor and unattractive as she may be, than for any others, even if they are outstanding for wealth and beauty. All should realize, of course, that this feeling of affection is only for the persons, virtues, and grace found in the Congregation, and not for anything it has which is attractive and brings public acclaim; that is something we should make a special effort not to give in to and to shun. And this is not just for the individual with regard to himself, but applies to the Congregation as a whole. This means that not only do we not seek publicity or applause for it, but even that we want it disdained and kept unobtrusive in the Lord, remembering that it is the mustard seed, which cannot grow and bear fruit unless it is sown, hidden underground.

11.—In the same way, all should be on their guard against two further vices, from opposite extremes, both militating against the whole purpose of the mission. They are all the more dangerous because it is not immediately apparent that they are vices, as they insidiously assume so different an appearance that they are very often taken to be real virtues. This pair are laziness and undisciplined enthusiasm. The first vice, under the guise of the prudent care of health needed for better worshipping God and helping others, gradually infiltrates our way of thinking and makes us look for bodily

comforts and excuse ourselves from the effort which virtue demands. Laziness suggests to us that this effort is far greater than it really is, so that virtue, which in itself should be universally loved, strikes us as repugnant. This vice draws down upon us the curse fulminated by the Holy Spirit against the sort of workers who do God's work carelessly or fraudulently. The second vice, on the other hand, masking our self-love or anger, impels us to act harshly toward both sinners and ourselves, and to take on more work than we can manage, even against obedience, resulting in damage to physical and mental health, involving us later in a frantic search for cures, so that we end up sluggish and sensual. For these reasons all of us should make every effort to shun these two extremes, always steering a middle course. And there is no doubt that we will find this middle course by carefully keeping our Rules and Constitutions, properly understood, and by listening to those guardians of wisdom in whose hands God's special providence has placed us, but only if, when necessary, we humbly and trustingly look for a ruling from them and accept their direction totally and unreservedly.

12.—We must remember, above all, that although we are always to be guided by those virtues which make up the spirit of the mission, we should be armed with them to the fullest possible extent when the time comes for us to minister to the country people. At that time we should look on them as the five smooth stones with which, even at the first assault, we will defeat the Goliath from hell in the name of the Lord of Armies and will bring the Philistines, that is, sinners, under God's rule. But this will happen only if we first lay aside Saul's armor and make use of David's sling. In other words, we must go out preaching the Gospel like Saint Paul, not with a show of oratory or philosophy, but grounded in doctrine, and in the power of the Spirit, even if eloquence is lacking. We should remember that since, as the same Apostle says, God chose those who, by human standards, are weak, foolish, and contemptible in order to rout and destroy those who, by the same standards, are learned and powerful, we can hope that in His boundless goodness He will give us the grace to cooperate in our own way in His work of saving peo-

ple, especially poor persons in country areas, even though we are the least deserving of workers.⁶⁶

13.—All should foster a special respect and love for our Rules or Constitutions, even including the ones which do not seem to be all that important, regarding all of them as means given to us by God Himself for growing in the holiness which our vocation calls for, leading to our working with greater ease and efficacy for people's salvation. All should therefore fervently make a deeply felt self-giving commitment to living according to them. As regards any points we find intellectually or psychologically distasteful, we should keep on trying to overcome self-centeredness and to defeat the merely natural, remembering that, according to Christ's words, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent bear it away.

14.—Each one is to have his own copy of these Rules or Common Constitutions, and also of the particular ones concerning his own duties, and should read them through, or hear them read, every three months. That is so they will be more deeply rooted in our memory and mind, and therefore more completely lived up to. We should try to understand them correctly, and on a few occasions during the year we should each humbly ask the Superior to impose some penance for faults against them. By this humbling of ourselves we will more easily obtain forgiveness from the Lord for our faults, and be strengthened against further ones in the future. The fidelity with which we do this will, in fact, be an indication of our fidelity in following these Rules or Constitutions, and of our commitment to growth in holiness. However, if anyone notices that he has made some progress in living up to them, he is to thank Christ the Lord for it and should ask Him to give him, and the whole Congregation, the grace to live up to them even more completely in the future. As well as this, we must get it firmly into our heads that when we have carried out all we have been asked to do, we should, following Christ's advice, say to ourselves that we are useless ser-

⁶⁶Sarzana: After "Saul's armor" the following text appears: "that is, confidence in human means which fight directly against the teachings of the Gospel, since experience teaches us that such weaponry not only cannot be overcome, but also cannot be assailed."

vants, that we have done what we were supposed to do, and that, in fact, we could not have done anything without Him.⁶⁷

**118. - FOUNDATION AND CLOSURE OF THE MAJOR SEMINARY
IN MONTPELLIER**

(1659)

In the year 1659, the Bishop of Montpellier¹ requested some of our priests for the direction of an ecclesiastical seminary in his diocese and city of Montpellier. M. Vincent, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, sent there M. Get,² Superior of this Marseilles house, and M. Parisy, priest of the same Congregation. They presented themselves to the Bishop for the direction of his seminary, where they spent about a year and a half, in charge of the clerics of the seminary. They lived there with a Brother and one servant on the money the Bishop gave them, namely, one hundred livres a month. Since, however, the Bishop did not find the means of providing them with permanent funds, M. Vincent felt it advisable to withdraw them after a year, so they returned to this Marseilles house, to the regret of that good Prelate, who wanted to keep them.

⁶⁷Sarzana: The first sentence reads: "Each one is to have his own copy of these Common Rules . . . and should read them through, or hear them read, every month."

Document 118. - Arch. Nat., S 6707, notebook from around 1670.

¹François de Bosquet (cf. VIII, 19, n. 5).

²Firmin Get (cf. VIII, 3, n. 1).

119. - VERDICT OF FULMINATION¹ FOR THE UNION
OF SAINT-LAZARE PRIORY TO THE MISSION

(July 21, 1659)

To all those who will see these letters, I, Nicolas Porcher, priest, Doctor of Theology of the Sorbonne, Vicegerent in the office of the Officialis of Paris, and representative delegated for this case by our Holy Father Pope Alexander VII, now reigning, greetings.

Be it known that, in view of the request presented to us by Messire Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, stating that, having negotiated by a contract of January 7, 1632, with Brother Adrien Le Bon, Prior of the Saint Lazare-lez-Paris House, and the religious of the house and properties dependent on it to be united to the Congregation of the Mission and to belong to the priests of the Congregation established in it with the duties and conditions included in the contract, the Provosts of Merchants and the Magistrates of this city of Paris gave their agreement to implement this by an Act of March 24, 1632. Because, however, the religious, Abbot, and convent of Saint-Victor Abbey, as well as the Pastors in this city and the faubourgs of Paris, opposed the union, the Parlement, without taking account of the oppositions, ordained, by its decision of the following August 21, that it would examine the agreement and the letters patent.

By another decision, on the following September 7, it ordained that the contract and letters patent should be recorded in the registers of the Parlement so that the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission could enjoy the consequences of them, and that they should go to the Archbishop of Paris to obtain letters of union and perpetual establishment of their Congregation in the Saint-Lazare House, according to the conditions of the contract, with the obligation of receiving lepers and of meeting the terms of the foundations. Those letters of union were granted by the Archbishop on the last day of December of the same year, and confirmed and approved by

Document 119. - Arch. Nat., M 212, original.

¹An act by which an ecclesiastical court pronounces, without equivocation, a decree that finalizes in perpetuity a previously disputed judgment.

the late King Louis XIII by other letters patent of January 1633. They were recorded in the registers of the Parlement the following March 21, and in the *Chambre des Comptes* and the *Cour des Aides*, along with the first letters patent, on October 18 of the same year 1633, and on January 9, 1634.

M. Vincent, desiring the contract to be approved in the Court of Rome, and to obtain there confirmation of the letters of union from the Archbishop and approval of the introduction and establishment of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission in the Saint-Lazare House, had the necessary procedures followed in the Court of Rome. After the affair had been examined in the Congregation of Cardinals in charge of the affairs of Regulars, Pope Urban VIII, of happy memory, on their advice signed the petition, dated at Saint Peter's in Rome, March 15, in the twelfth year of his pontificate. The Bulls for this were not sent in his time, nor during the time of his successor Innocent X, of happy memory. M. Vincent obtained them from our Holy Father Pope Alexander VII, now reigning, in the form called *Rationi congruit*, dated at Saint Peter's in Rome, April 18, in the year of the Incarnation of the Lord 1655,² in the first year of his pontificate.

By these Bulls, His Holiness wills that the favor granted by his predecessor Urban VIII take effect from the day of its issue, March 15, 1635, as if the Bulls had been sent on that date. He asks us, through the apostolic authority granted us, to ratify those Bulls and, in so doing, to approve and reconfirm in perpetuity the union and concession already made of the Saint-Lazare House and Priory, its appurtenances, and its dependencies to the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission. Our ordinance was at the bottom of the request of last April 8, stating that it would be communicated to the Promoter;

The Promoter's conclusions required that, before acting on the request, information should be sought on the advantages and usefulness of the union and on the execution and completion of the obligations contained in the contract, and that those who claim to have

²Cf. Doc. 112.

an interest be subpoenaed by way of public notices, which should be posted for this purpose on the doors of the Saint-Lazare House;

At our ordinary session of April 23, we ordained that, before taking action on the petition and fulmination of the Bull of union at the request of the Promoter, all persons claiming rights and interests in the union would be subpoenaed by public notices, which would be posted on the doors of the office of the Officialis and of the Saint-Lazare House, so that, together with them—or in their absence—as it would be deemed advisable, we would ask the Promoter to give proof of the facts contained in the petition and Bulls of confirmation of union, by means of letters or witnesses. This would be done in order to give information *super commodo vel incommodo*³ of the union and implementation of the agreements laid down in the petitions, and on the responsibilities, clauses, and conditions stated in the letters of union granted formerly by the late Archbishop. For that reason, we would go to the place to take an inventory and make a visitation, listen to the witnesses, have the minutes of all that drawn up, and, after everything had been examined and communicated to the Promoter, have it ordained as thought proper;

The warrant obtained by our authority on the last day of the month of April to subpoena before us on the day specified, through public notices posted on the doors of the Paris office of the Officialis and the Saint-Lazare House, all those who would claim to have rights or interests in the fulmination of those Bulls of confirmation and union, so as to proceed as thought proper;

The report of the public notices announcing the summons made last May 2 by Angibaut the Beadle;

The declaration of absence given by us on the tenth of the following month of May, by which we ordained that those claiming rights would be summoned again by similar public notices, as previously stated in Angibaut's report of the twelfth of the month of May, made in consequence of the declaration of absence, wherein it

³On the suitability or unsuitability.

is clear that the subpoenas were issued through public notices at the request of the Promoter on the declaration of absence;

Our decision of Wednesday, May 21, by which we made two declarations of absence against persons who could have, or might claim to have, interest in the fulmination of the Bulls, in consequence of which we arranged to go to the place, assisted by the Promoter and the court clerk delegated by us in this affair, to make our report of the state of the Saint-Lazare House and Priory and dependencies and to ascertain the contents of the petition in order to communicate everything to the Promoter, to be ordained as thought proper;

The report of Angibaut, in which, in consequence of our aforementioned decision, the witnesses who could testify on the content of the petition presented in order to obtain fulmination and approval of the Bulls, and the persons who might have an interest in it, were summoned to appear before us at 10 a.m. on Friday, June 27, in the Saint-Lazare House and Priory to draw up the information and report on the state of the place, the feasibility and usefulness or the impracticality of the union, and the implementation of the clauses and conditions fully described in the Acts of contract and union;

The report prepared by us on the state of the site and buildings of the Saint-Lazare House and dependencies;

The information given by us containing the declarations of five witnesses, by which it is clear that the union is not only useful and necessary, but that everything stated in the contract between the Prior of Saint-Lazare and the religious of the priory, and in the Act of union drawn up as a result by the late Archbishop, has been, and is, executed day by day and point for point with no transgression made therein by the Priests of the Mission;

Another decision handed down by us on Saturday, June 28, whereby we ordained that all the above-mentioned proceedings, together with the Bulls of union and other Acts quoted in the petition and other documents justifying the content of the petition, that would have been collected by Messire Vincent, should be given to us to be communicated to the Promoter, to be ordained as thought proper.

Considering the Bulls addressed to us and empowering us, together with the contract signed before Desnotz and Païsant, notaries at the Châtelet of Paris, on January 7, 1632, between the priest Brother Adrien Le Bon, who, when living, was a professed religious and Prior of the conventual priory, leprosarium, and administration of the Canons Regular of Saint-Lazare, and other religious named in it, on the one hand; and M. Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, acting in his own name and in the name of all the other priests of the Congregation, containing the agreement made between them, and its clauses and conditions for attaining the union and incorporation;

A power of attorney signed before the notaries Desnotz and Païsant on January 7, 1632, by Brother Adrien Le Bon, Prior and Administrator of Saint-Lazare Priory and Leprosarium, and other religious named in it, who, in view of the above-mentioned contract and in execution of it, by means of this power of attorney constituted as their Procurator the bearer of the document, to appear for them and in their names before our Holy Father the Pope and elsewhere, wherever necessary, and to consent there to the implementation of all the Bulls necessary to unite the Saint-Lazare House and Priory, with its benefits, profits, income, and emoluments, to the Congregation of the Mission, as well as the fulmination of the Bulls and their approval that it would be suitable to give;

Another Act of power of attorney signed January 8, 1632, before Desnotz and Païsant, notaries at the Châtelet, by Brother Adrien Le Bon, Prior, by which he gives authority to the bearer of the document to hand over, in his name, the priory, leprosarium, or administration of Saint-Lazare, and even to place his administration of it in the hands of our Holy Father the Pope or another holding this power, in order to bring about the union and incorporation to the Congregation of the Mission, instituted and established in Paris, with the reservations, clauses, and conditions contained in it;

Another power of attorney passed before the notaries on January . . . , 1632, by the Prior Brother Adrien Le Bon, in which he gives the bearer of the document the authority to appear in his name both in the court of the Paris Parlement, as well as in any other place

where needed, and there to agree to the verification and approval of the transactions and Act of union when they are executed and received;

The letters patent obtained by Vincent de Paul and other priests of the Congregation from the late Jean-François de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris, containing the union of the Saint-Lazare Priory to the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, with the reservations, clauses, conditions, and duties included;

The Act of the taking possession and installation of Vincent de Paul and other priests of the Mission in the Saint-Lazare Priory in consequence of the letters and contract drawn up by the Archbishop in the presence of Brother Adrien Le Bon, at the time Prior and Administrator of the priory, and of its other religious, with their consent, on January 8;

Another Act, of March 14, 1632, containing the agreement of the Provost of Merchants and the Magistrates of the city of Paris, all having given their consent to the union and incorporation;

The letters patent from the King, signed *Louis*, and on the fold: *In the name of the King, de Loménie*, and sealed with the Great Seal in red and green silk thread, containing the confirmation and approval of the contract established between the Prior and religious of Saint-Lazare and the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, in order to have the contract implemented according to its form and content;

Together with the union made by the Archbishop as a result, and the clauses, obligations, and conditions contained in it, on the fold of the letters are the rulings for registering it in the Parlement, the *Chambre des Comptes*, and the *Cour des Aides* in Paris, dated September 7, 1632, and signed *du Tillet*; October 11, 1633, signed *Gobellin*; and January 9, 1634, signed *Richer*, with their paraphs;

A decision of the Parlement Court given between the General, Superior, and religious of the Congregation of Saint-Victor-lez-Paris, the plaintiffs; Messire Louis de Mersigny, Abbot of Quincy, Order of Cîteaux; the Pastors of the city, faubourgs, and outskirts of Paris, all being opposed to the request and acting with the religious of Saint-Victor, opponents of the ratification of the let-

ters patent obtained from the King by the Priests of the Mission in the month of January 1632;⁴ and the Prior and religious of Saint-Lazare and the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, the defendants, on August 21, 1632. By which Act the Court ordained, without considering the oppositions and interventions, that it would examine the contract and letters obtained by the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, in order to make a proper judgment, everything being first sent to the Attorney General of the King;

Another ruling, of September 7, 1632, after the contract and letters had been examined by the Court, ordained that the documents be recorded in the registers of the Court so that the defendants could enjoy their effect and, in order to have them implemented, they would go to the Archbishop to obtain his letters of establishment in perpetuity for the Saint-Lazare House, on the conditions contained in the contract and others stated in the ruling;

An Act signed before the notaries Coustart and Païsant on December 20, 1632, by the Prior, Brother Adrien Le Bon, containing his declaration and consent, which he again gives to the union to the Congregation of the Mission;

The other letters patent from the King obtained by the Priests of the Mission in January 1633, with the signature *Louis*, and, on the fold, *De Lomémie*, and sealed with the Great Seal, by which His Majesty confirms and approves the union and perpetual incorporation made in conformity with the contract, on the fold of which letters are the decisions of registration in the Court of the Parlement, the *Chambre des Comptes*, and the *Cour des Aides*, dated March 21 and October 11, 1633, and January 9, 1634;

The report of notification given to the Prior and religious of Saint-Lazare of the letters of union by de Sainte-Beuve, bailiff of the court, on April 26, 1633;

An ancient deed written on parchment, dated May 20, 1375, signed *Poupet* and sealed, in which it is declared that the Saint-Lazare Priory has always been dependent upon the Bishops of Paris for both spiritual and temporal matters;

⁴Cf. Doc. 80.

Eight extracts from the registers of the diocesan Secretariat of Paris dated March 14, 1505; November 17, 1518; September 23, 1520; August 2, 1525; October 3, 1558; September 15, 1563; the last day of May 1565; and May 11, 1592, from which it is clear that the house was previously administered and governed by secular priests;

A copy of a deed of May 20, 1375, from which it is clear that, at that time, the Saint-Lazare House and Priory was administered by secular priests;

Another ancient deed on paper, of February 20, 1518, drawn up by Messire Étienne Poncher, then Bishop of Paris, and signed by M. d'Orléans, whereby it is evident that, having introduced the reformed Canons Regular into the Saint-Lazare Priory at the time, among several statutes he is drawing up for them as well as for the care of the lepers, he promises in his own name and in that of his successor Bishops to appoint to the Saint-Lazare Hospice and Priory a religious of the Congregation of Saint-Victor, as long as it abides by the reform, and, in the event that the reform should become lax, the Bishops of Paris would then recover their rights to establish there, as before, any other priests they choose;

An Act from the Chapter of Saint-Victor Abbey, dated Friday, December 5, 1625, whereby they surrendered to the Congregation all claims to the union that existed between them and the other houses of the Order, and separate from them;

Four different attestations from the Pastors of Pantin, Belleville-sur-Sablon, Romainville, and Livry, in the Paris diocese, wherein it is declared that the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission of the Saint-Lazare House have given missions, free of charge, in those parishes in the present year 1659.

Definitive conclusions of the Promoter:

Having considered everything, we, Vicegerent and the above-mentioned representative, by apostolic authority, in fulminating and executing the Bulls of our Holy Fathers Pope Urban VIII and Alexander VII, dated March 15, 1635, and April 18, 1655, have confirmed the union of the house and hospital or leprosarium of Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris to this Congregation of the Priests of the

Mission, made by the late Jean-François de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris, of happy memory; consequently, by the same authority, we have united, annexed, and incorporated it to the Congregation of the Mission so that this Congregation may enjoy in perpetuity the Saint-Lazare Leprosarium or Priory, with all profits, rights, incomes, and emoluments whatsoever, belonging to or dependent on them under any title or manner, as they have already enjoyed them peaceably since the union. All of this, in keeping with the responsibilities, clauses, and conditions laid down in the Bulls, the contract, and the letters of union of the late Archbishop, will be implemented by the Congregation according to their form and content.

Today, we ask the chief apostolic attorney that, in so far as it might be necessary, he once again place the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission in the material, real, and actual possession of the Saint-Lazare Priory and hospital or leprosarium, with all benefits, rights, profits, revenues, and emoluments, observing in that case the required customary procedures.

In testimony whereof, we have signed the present letters, countersigned also by M. Jean Roger, apostolic notary, taken as our bailiff in this affair, and we have sealed these letters with the seal of our court.

Given in Paris, July 21, 1659.

ROGER

PORCHER

**120. - ALIAS NOS, BRIEF ON THE VOW OF POVERTY
TAKEN IN THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION**

(August 12, 1659)

Pope Alexander VII, for the future remembrance of the matter.

Document 120. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Vow Register, written in Latin, copy authenticated on May 17, 1660. The translation of this document is the one given in the 1989 English edition of *Constitutions and Statutes of the Congregation of the Mission*. A few minor changes in translation and style have been made.

On a former occasion, in willing response to the petitions of our beloved son, Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, We approved the Congregation, according to the manner and form then expressly confirmed by Us, and also the pronouncing of simple vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience as well as stability in the Congregation with the object of devoting oneself for his entire life to the salvation of poor country people, these vows to be made after two years of probation.

When these vows are pronounced no one shall assist by way of accepting them in the name of the Congregation, or of Ourselves, or of the Roman Pontiff at the time. Only the Roman Pontiff, and the Superior General of the Congregation in the act of dismissal from the Congregation, may dispense from these vows. The Congregation is not, however, on this account to be considered of the number of Religious Orders, but is of the body of the secular clergy.

We have written more fully about this on a former occasion in a letter in the form of a Brief like this one, which was issued on September 22, 1655.¹ The tenor of that former Brief we wish to be considered as properly and sufficiently expressed herein.

More recently, the aforesaid Vincent has represented to us that many difficulties could arise concerning the observance of the simple vow of poverty in the Congregation, difficulties which might disturb the Congregation unless opportunely provided for by Us. Wherefore, the aforesaid Vincent earnestly desires that the Fundamental Statute on Poverty of the Congregation be strengthened by Our apostolic confirmation, the text of the Statute being as follows:

“All and everyone received into our Congregation, having pronounced the four vows, who possess immovable goods or simple benefices or will possess them in the future, though they retain dominion of all of them, shall not have free use of them; therefore, they may neither retain the fruits of such goods or benefices, nor turn them to their own use, without the permission of the Superior, but are held to dispense these fruits in pious works, with the permission and according to the judgment of the Superior. If, however,

¹Cf. Doc. 113.

they have parents or relatives in need, the Superior shall see to it in the Lord that their needs are relieved from these fruits before all else.”

We wish to treat Vincent, the Superior General, with special favors and kindness, absolving him and declaring him to be absolved from any ecclesiastical sentences, censures, and penalties of excommunication, suspension, and interdict *a jure vel ab homine*,² whatever the occasion or cause of imposition, if he be in any way bound by any of these, but only for the purpose of obtaining the effect of this letter.

We, in willing response to the petitions humbly presented to Us in his name, and with the counsel of our venerable Brothers, the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, interpreters of the Sacred Council of Trent, by means of the apostolic authority of this letter, confirm and approve the Statute quoted above, applying to it the force of an inviolable apostolic stability and supplying for every defect of law or fact should they in any way arise.

We decree that this present letter is and always shall be firm, valid, and efficacious, and that it shall be inviolably observed by those whom it concerns and will concern in the future; that it must be judged and defined by all judges, whether ordinary or delegated, even by auditors of the cases of the Apostolic Palace, according to what is stated above; and that any action to the contrary, whether done knowingly or in ignorance, by anyone or on any authority, is null and void, former provisions and all prescriptions of Our former letters and anything else to the contrary notwithstanding.

We wish further that the same acceptance, both in and outside of court, be everywhere granted to transcripts and printed copies of this letter, if signed in the hand of a public notary and stamped with the seal of the Superior General of the same Congregation or of some other person constituted in ecclesiastical dignity, as would be granted to the present letter itself if it were exhibited or presented.

Given at Rome, at Saint Mary Major, under the ring of the Fisherman, August 12, 1659, the fifth year of our pontificate.

²Cf. Doc. 112, n. 4.

**121. - DECLARATION FOR THE ELECTION
OF THE VICAR-GENERAL**

(October 7, 1659)

I, the undersigned, Vincent de Paul, most unworthy priest and Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, declare that since one of the Constitutions of our Congregation obliges me to name a Vicar-General before my death, to govern the Congregation after it until the election of my successor, I have named and do name M. Almérás, priest of our Congregation, who, I think before God, has the requisite qualities for it. I have reflected upon this during my retreat, which I began on October 2 of this year 1659, and am still in the process of making, and which I hope to finish on the tenth, with God's help. I have done so after celebrating Holy Mass, as I did several times before for this intention, placing myself in the state to choose from among the priests of our Congregation the person whom I would wish to have named at the moment I will go to receive the judgment God will pronounce on my poor soul at the hour of my death. I hope that M. Almérás will carry out well this duty of Vicar-General, with the help of Our Lord, which I ask of Him for this purpose.

In testimony whereof, I have written and signed the present document with my own hand, affixed my seal to it, and put it in a strongbox with two different locks. I have given one of the keys to M. Portail, my First Assistant, and have kept the other myself, which will be given, immediately after my death, to the oldest priest of the house where I die. The strongbox will be opened as soon as possible after that in the presence of my Assistants and most of the priests who are in the house where I will die. All of the above is in accordance with our Constitution, which I exhort M. Almérás to observe exactly.

Given at Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, October 7, 1659.

VINCENT DEPAUL, *unworthy priest,*
Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission

**122. - DECLARATION FOR THE ELECTION OF THE SUPERIOR
GENERAL**

(October 9, 1659)

I, the undersigned, Vincent de Paul, most unworthy priest and Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, declare that, since one of our Constitutions, concerning the election of the Superior General of our Congregation who is to succeed me, obliges me to propose, before my death, two of our priests who seem to me to have the requisite qualities, one to be chosen by the Congregation, or, as the case may be, by those elected by the Provincial Assemblies to be present at the General Assembly after my death, unless it prefers to elect someone else from the same Congregation; I declare, then, that I think M. Alméras and M. Berthe, priests of the Congregation, have the requisite qualities for this, with all due deference to the electors. I hope also that the one who will be elected will correct the mistakes I have made in this office, for which I most humbly ask pardon of God and of the Congregation, prostrate in spirit at its feet, and I thank it most humbly for its charity in bearing with me in view of the abominable things in my life and my poor leadership.

I attest furthermore that I have observed exactly what the Constitution indicates that the Superior General should observe regarding the choice he makes of the two persons he is to name to the Congregation. I did so during my retreat, which I began on the second day of this month and hope to conclude on the tenth of the same month of October 1659 in our Saint-Lazare House, after my annual confession. I attest also that I have celebrated Holy Mass for this intention, immediately after which I affirmed, in the presence of M. Portail, my First Assistant, that I am naming those two members of the Company, Messieurs Alméras and Berthe, for the above-mentioned purpose. I have done so with God alone in view and with no inclination nor particular affection whatsoever that I may feel toward them, and have acted in this as I would wish to have

done at the moment of the awesome judgment Our Lord will make of me as I depart this life.

In testimony whereof, I have written and signed the present document with my own hand, affixed our seal to it, and put it into a strongbox with two different locks, which I have sealed with four of our seals on the four corners of a sheet of paper, which indicate that it is the strongbox in which I have placed this declaration, and the strongbox has been placed inside a larger one. I have given one of the keys to M. Portail and have kept the other myself, to be placed, immediately after my death, in the hands of the oldest priest of the house where I die, and the strongbox opened in the presence of the Congregation, assembled to carry out the election.

Given at Saint-Lazare, October 9, 1659.

VINCENT DEPAUL, *unworthy priest,*
Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission

**123. - LETTERS PATENT CONFIRMING THE UNION
OF SAINT-LAZARE PRIORY TO THE MISSION**

(March 1660)

Louis, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, to all present and to come, greetings.

Our dearly beloved Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, has humbly pointed out to us that our most honored Lord and father King Louis XIII, of happy memory, had done them the favor of granting them his letters patent, dated January 1632,¹ confirming the contract and agreement of union of the Saint-Lazare House and Priory, situated in the faubourg Saint-Denis-lez-Paris, with the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, for the implementation of which the Provost of Merchants and the Magistrates of this same city of Paris gave their consent by an Act of March 24 of the said year.

Document 123. - Arch. Nat., M 212, original.

¹ Cf. Doc. 80.

The religious, Abbot, and convent of Saint-Victor, together with the Pastors of the city and faubourgs of Paris, opposed the union, but the Parlement Court, by its decree of August 21 of the said year, ordered that, despite the oppositions, it would examine the contract, letters patent, and municipal consent, and by a decree of the following September 7, ordered that the contract, letters, and Acts be recorded in the registers of the Court so that the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission might enjoy their effect and contents, and that they were to go to the Archbishop of Paris to obtain letters of union and establishment in perpetuity of their Congregation to the Saint-Lazare House, with the responsibilities and conditions mentioned therein.² The letters of union were granted by the Archbishop, dated last December, confirmed by other letters patent of the late King, dated January 1633,³ and recorded in the registers of the Parlement the following March 21 in the *Chambre des Comptes* and the *Cour des Aides*, on October 11, 1633, and January 9, 1634.

Since the petitioner wanted the contract and Act to be approved in the Court of Rome and to obtain from His Holiness confirmation of the union and establishment in perpetuity of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission in the Saint-Lazare House, he hastened the proceedings in the Court of Rome. After the affair had been carefully examined by the Congregation of Cardinals, Pope Urban VIII, on their report and advice, signed the petition, dated in Rome on the Ides of March, in the twelfth year of his pontificate, which is, according to our calculation, March 15, 1635. Since, however, the Bulls were not sent in his time nor in the time of his successor, Innocent X, the petitioner obtained new Bulls from Our Holy Father Pope Alexander VII, now reigning, transcribed and dated at Saint Peter's in Rome, the fourteenth day before the Kalends of May, in the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord 1655, the first year of his pontificate, which, according to our calculation, is April 18, 1655.⁴ By these Bulls His Holiness, willing that the favor granted by his predecessor Urban VIII have its full and entire effect from the

²Cf. Doc. 83.

³Cf. Doc. 84.

⁴Cf. Doc. 112.

day of its date, informs and orders the Officialis of Paris, delegated for this office, to approve, substitute, corroborate, and confirm the union; to unite, annex, and incorporate even once again the Saint-Lazare House and Priory with the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, with the responsibilities and conditions mentioned therein, humbly requesting our letters patent necessary for this.

For these reasons, being fully informed of the uprightness, ability, life, good morals, and fidelity of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission; considering the great benefits and outstanding services they have rendered and continually render to the Church and to the people by the instructions they give to young men in the seminaries and during retreats and ordination retreats, and the special blessings God is bestowing on their work during the missions they give in the rural areas, going from village to village, to distant countries, even as far as the Indies, spending themselves, their income and revenues, their health and their lives, without receiving any salary for this nor expecting any other recompense than from God; desiring to assure and perpetuate the continuation of so many holy exercises, so useful and necessary to the Church and the people, and in order to indicate to our beloved Vincent de Paul, Superior General, and the other Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, our intention to maintain and preserve them, and to add to the favors and privileges granted and conceded to them by us or our predecessor Kings in favor of their Congregation; after having shown to our Council the Bulls, verdict, and official report of fulmination of them, dated July 21, 1659,⁵ made by the priest Nicolas Porcher, Doctor of the Sorbonne, Vicegerent in the office of the Officialis of Paris, the representative delegated in this office by our Holy Father the Pope Alexander VII, now reigning, and having found nothing in them contrary to the holy decrees, sacred Councils, rights, and liberties of the Gallican Church and the customs of our kingdom;

We, by our special favor, full power, and royal authority, have praised, accepted, approved, and confirmed, and by these present letters signed in our own hand, do praise, accept, and approve the

⁵Cf. Doc. 119.

union and confirmation of this union and incorporation formerly made of the Saint-Lazare House and Priory to the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, with the responsibilities and conditions stated therein; we will, and it pleases us, that the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission and their successors should enjoy in perpetuity the rights, benefits, profits, income, emoluments, and dependencies of the Saint-Lazare House, in accord with and conformably to the Bulls.

Today, we give our beloved and loyal Councillors, the persons holding our Parlement Court in Paris, the command that they register these present letters with the Bulls and official report of fulmination and of all that is contained in them, to be enjoyed fully and peacefully and in perpetuity by the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission and their successors, without causing or allowing any disturbance or impediment whatsoever to be done to them.

And, so that this matter may be firm and stable, we have had our seal affixed to these present letters.

Given in Aix, in March 1660, the seventeenth year of our reign.

LOUIS

In the name of the King.

DE LOMÉNIE

